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PRINCIPLES

OF

MORAL

AND

POLITICAL SCIENCE;

BEING CHIEFLY A

RETROSPECT of LECTURES delivered in the COLLEGE of EDINBURGH.

59970

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LATE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Huc enim pertinet, animal hoc providum, fagax, multiplex, acutum, memor, plenum rationis et consilii, quem vocamus hominem, præclara quadam conditione generatum esse a summo Deo. CIC. DE LEGG. Cap. VII.

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THE

OCCASION AND PROGRESS

OF THE

FOLLOWING WORK.

THE Author was called to the profeſſion of moral philoſophy in the year 1764; and continued in it twenty years. When he entered on the duties of this office, he did not ſet himſelf at once to compoſe a courſe of lectures, to be read to his pupils; and thus to anticipate the labours of his future life: But, conceiving that diſcuſſion, and even information, might come with more effect from a perſon that was making his own higheſt efforts of diſquiſition and judgement, than from one that might be languiſhing while he read, or repeated a lecture previouſly compoſed; he determined, while he beſtowed his utmoſt diligence in ſtudying the ſubject, in chuſing the order in which it was to be treated, and in preparing himſelf for every ſucceſſive ſtep he was to make in his courſe, to have no more in writing than the heads, or ſhort notes, from which he was to ſpeak; preparing himſelf however very diligently for every particular day's work.

By this means, except in ſo far as the particular views of his ſubject became familiar to him, his laſt year's labour was nearly as great as the firſt.

In proportion as his notes acquired a certain form, he had them printed for the uſe of his ſtudents; firſt under different titles; but, at laſt, under the title of Inſtitutes of Moral Philoſophy: He nevertheleſs experienced, that the courſe he was to follow, even when ſo fixed, was ſubject to ſome variations; and, as theſe appeared to be improvements, and ſerved to enliven his own taſk with ſome acceſſions of novelty, he did not attempt to check or reſtrain them.

When his health obliged him to retire from the labours of teaching, he was glad to find that even the decline of life might be employed, though not in attempting the invention of entire new ſyſtems, at leaſt in recalling labours that were paſt, and in filling up general titles already inveſtigated with ſome of his cuſtomary diſcuſſion and illuſtration.

In performing this work, however, he has indulged the ſame, or perhaps greater freedoms than he was wont to take in renewing his courſe of diſquiſition and argument, from year to year. He conceived that what is intended for a book ſubmitted to public inſpection, might require the ſuppreſſion of ſome things not improper in the firſt introduction

of

of youth to the ſtudy of a ſubject. He has therefore omitted ſome titles that were entered in his notes and in the Inſtitutes. And he has treated the hiſtory of the ſpecies in a different manner; not without hopes that this his laſt method, in the order of progreſſion may have gained ſome advantage over the former; and that the public will impute defects in the execution of his work to circumſtances in which he has reaſon to hope for all the effects of candour and even of indulgence.

It may be aſked, perhaps, why he ſhould reſtrict his argument, as he has done, to the topics of mere natural religion and reaſon. This, being the foundation of every ſuperſtructure whether in morality or religion, and therefore, to be ſeparately treated, he conſidered as that part of the work which was allotted to him. Farther inſtitutions may improve, but cannot ſuperſede what the Almighty has revealed in his works, and in the ſuggeſtions of reaſon to man.

When firſt we from the teeming womb were brought,
With inborn precepts, then, our ſouls were fraught.
ROWE'S LUCAN, lib. 9. line 984 *.

And what the Author of our nature has ſo taught muſt be conſidered

* Dixitque ſemel naſcentibus auctor
Quicquid ſcire licet.

conſidered as the teſt of every ſubſequent inſtitution that is offered as coming from him.

Many, no doubt, may be conſcious, that in a continued purſuit of the ſame ſubject for ſo long a time, they themſelves could have done better; but in this, it is to be regretted only, that they have not done ſo: For in this field, there is room for many labourers; and the ſubject, though never new, is always intereſting: It is ſo in the ſpecimen of every particular life; in the hiſtory of every particular age or nation, and even in the lucubrations of every faithful tranſcriber of what nature ſuggeſts.

Although, therefore, an author may have been preceded by men of diſtinguiſhed ability in former, or in the preſent times; it implies no degree of arrogance to follow, even ſuch reapers, in gleaning materials from this inexhauſtible field of reflection, on which mankind have been employed from the beginning, and on which they will continue to be employed to the end of time. The moſt induſtrious may be glad if any one think his labours are uſeful; and no way ſurprized, if many ſhould think that they might have been ſpared.

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PRINCIPLES

OF

MORAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE.

INTRODUCTION.

MOST ſubjects in nature may be conſidered under two aſpects; under that of their actual ſtate, and under that of a ſpecific excellence, or defect, of which they are ſuſceptible. INTROD.

Under the firſt, they are ſubjects of mere deſcription, or ſtatement of fact. Under the ſecond, they are objects of eſtimation or contempt, of praiſe or cenſure.

In reſpect to what men have actually done or exhibited, human nature is a ſubject of hiſtory and phyſical ſcience: Conſidered in reſpect to the different meaſures of good and evil, of which men are ſuſceptible, the ſame nature is a ſubject of diſcipline and moral ſcience.

In treating of Man, as a ſubject of hiſtory, we collect facts, and endeavour to conceive his nature as it actually is, or has actually been, apart from any notion of ideal perfection, or defect.

INTROD. In treating of him as a ſubject of moral ſcience, we endeavour to underſtand what he ought to be; without being limited, in our conception, to the meaſure of attainment or failure, exhibited in the caſe of any particular perſon or ſociety of men.

To have an object or purpoſe, and to employ means for the attainment of it, is the diſtinctive condition of Mind or Intelligent Being. The firſt implies Will and Choice: The ſecond implies Energy and Power. For man, therefore, to know his province, and to be qualified for his ſtation, requires equally that he ſhould be acquainted with the foundations of both.

Animals have power, conſiſting in muſcular ſtrength; and, in this reſpect, Man is inferior to many of the brutes: But his dominion in nature is derived from a different ſource;—from his ſuperior ſkill, and the authority of a mind over-ruling and wiſe.

The power of the huſbandman conſiſts in the knowledge of ſoils and manures: That of the phyſician in his knowledge of the animal œconomy, diet, and food. The power of the engineer conſiſts in his knowledge of the laws of motion, to which the ſtructure of his works ſhould be fitted: And it may be ſaid of mankind in general, that an extenſion of knowledge is an acceſſion of power.

Where ſubjects are within the reach of man, and may be diſpoſed of at pleaſure, knowledge of the laws of nature, or of the forms according to which nature herſelf proceeds, in reſpect to ſuch ſubjects, will enable the artiſt, in every branch, to have the operation of nature repeated to his reſpective effect or purpoſe.

The

The chemiſt, by his knowledge of a menſtruum, can have the hardeſt ſubſtance of metal diſſolved, or reduced into a fluid ſtate; as Archimedes, by his knowledge of the lever, we are told, could have ſhips ſuſpended in the air, with all their lading and crews. INTROD.

To man there is a ſubject of ſtudy, and a material of art, of more immediate concern than the ſoil from which he raiſes his food, or the mechanical reſiſtance which he may wiſh to overcome: His own mind is a province of more importance, and more entirely ſubjected to his government.

It is ſomewhere mentioned by Mr Addiſon, as a notion among the ſtatuaries, that in every block of marble, there is an exquiſite figure, if the ſculptor be qualified only to remove the ſuperfluous matter. This manner of expreſſing the fitneſs of marble to be employed in ſtatuary, may, perhaps with leſs indulgence of fancy, be applied to mind. Here there is a godlike form of underſtanding and of will, that may be found by every perſon who is deſirous to find it, and who is reſolute to clear away the erroneous matter under which it is concealed and disfigured. Here alſo, we may preſume that knowledge is power; and that, whoever is ſucceſsful in the ſtudy of his own nature, as he may lay the foundations of a happy choice in the exerciſe of his will, ſo he may lay the foundations of power alſo, in applying the laws of his nature to the command of himſelf.

The ſubject, even to thoſe who give it no attention, is ever preſent and familiar; and, for this reaſon, perhaps, the leſs underſtood.

The mind is qualified by nature to recogniſe itſelf; but, on account of the little uſe which is commonly made of this qua-

INTROD. lification, it is aptly enough compared to the eye, that perceives every object beſides itſelf. In moſt men, indeed, intelligence appears to be little more than a principle of life, or a ſpecies of organ employed in the perception of external things, but incapable of ſtating itſelf as a ſubject of reflection or ſtudy. It is thus that the vulgar, by diſuſe, or by the habit of attending only to what is preſented to their ſenſes, loſe or impair the powers of reflection; and even men of ſcience, excited by the deſire of knowledge, become intimate with the laws of every nature but their own; and the more they purſue other objects of ſtudy, the more they are confirmed in the habit of neglecting themſelves: Inſomuch, that, in a period of many pretenſions to ſcience, it became the firſt office of moral wiſdom practiſed by Socrates, to recal the attention of mankind from the heavens to the earth, or from the conſideration of things remote to the near and immediate concerns of human life.

The only condition on which we can receive information of this matter is, that we attend to the facts of which we are conſcious in ourſelves; and whoever pretends to tell us of any thing new, or that is not of our own minds, has miſtaken his ſubject, or would miſlead us from it.

Queſtions may be ſtated, and a method propoſed; but he alone who can recur to himſelf with proper reflection can make any advance in ſuch ſtudies. And although, in the following pages, there may appear a continual effort to ſtate the argument, as well as to arrange the matter in queſtion; yet the Author is ſenſible that method is the principal aid he can give, and that, to ſucceed in the ſtudy of mind, every reader muſt perform the work for himſelf.

A principal difficulty, indeed, in entering upon the ſtudy of our own nature, may ariſe from the familiarity of the ſubject, and from a preſumption that we are already poſſeſſed of full information. The mind is conſcious of itſelf, and the learner of moral wiſdom is himſelf the witneſs to be cited in evidence of the truth. He muſt be content to recollect what every one knows; to value a fact rather for its conſequence than its novelty; and even to value it the more for its being notorious and common. It is from the ordinary courſe of things that the laws of nature are collected; and it is upon the ſame ordinary courſe that the artiſt muſt rely for the conduct of his art, and the ſucceſs of his operations. In ſo much that, although things new and ſtrange may amuſe the imagination; yet the affectation of novelty is often miſplaced in ſcience of any kind, but no where ſo much as in the ſtudy of mind; concerning which, the facts, if fairly ſtated, cannot be new to the mind itſelf.

In determining the courſe which man ought to run, we muſt obſerve the ſteps he is qualified to make, and gueſs at the termination of his progreſs, from the beginning of it, or from the direction in which he ſets out.

As the ſtudy of human nature may refer to the actual ſtate, or to the improveable capacity, of man, it is evident, that, the ſubjects being connected, we cannot proceed in the ſecond, but upon the foundations which are laid in the firſt. Our knowledge of what any nature ought to be, muſt be derived from our knowledge of its faculties and powers; and the attainment to be aimed at muſt be of the kind which theſe faculties and powers are fitted to produce. From the Horſe we cannot expect the flight of the Eagle, nor from the Eagle the firm pace and ſtrength of the Horſe.

It

INTROD. It is too common, in treating of human affairs, to indulge ſome bias to panegyric or ſatire. The laſt may gratify our ſpleen; as the firſt, by raiſing the pretenſions of a nature in which we partake, may flatter our vanity. But, though either may proceed from an allowable diſpoſition, the one from partiality to our kind, the other from indignation at vice; yet they are ſurely miſplaced, and ought to be avoided in diſquiſitions of ſcience, where the object is to aſcertain fact and reality, and in our judgement neither to over-rate, nor depreciate the ſubject; but to cultivate the good of which it is ſuſceptible, and to reſtrain the evil to which it is expoſed.

In this, with all the intimacy of every individual with himſelf, he has much to learn, not only in the habit of which the vulgar are ſo little poſſeſſed, the habit of obſerving what paſſes in their own minds, but likewiſe in the habit of turning what they know of themſelves to account.

There is alſo much to be learned from the ſyſtem of things, in the midſt of which mankind are placed, and from the varieties of aſpect under which the ſpecies has appeared in different ages and nations. So far, without being diſqualified to recollect our own feelings and thoughts, we may indulge the habit of looking abroad for objects of obſervation; or, in doing ſo, may rather be incited to ſtudy the intimate principles of our own nature, which have appeared with ſo many ſignal effects in the hiſtory of mankind.

For this reaſon it is thought proper, in the choice of our method, to look abroad into the general order of things, and to contemplate the place as well as the deſcription of man, while we endeavour

deavour to fix the diſtinction of good and evil relative to his nature; a diſtinction which may be collected from his ſituation relative to other beings, as well as from the deſcription of what he is in himſelf.

The Author, in ſome of the ſtatements which follow, may be thought partial to the Stoic philoſophy; but is not conſcious of having warped the truth to ſuit with any ſyſtem whatever. His notions were taken up, where certainly Truth might be learned, however little it were formed into ſyſtem by thoſe from whom it was collected.

The Stoics conceived human life under the image of a Game; at which the entertainment and merit of the players conſiſted in playing attentively and well, whether the ſtake was great or ſmall*. This game the author has had occaſion to ſee played in camps, on board of ſhips, and in preſence of an enemy, with the ſame or greater eaſe than is always to be found in the moſt ſecure ſituations: And his thoughts were long employed to account for this appearance, before he adverted to the illuſtration which is given by Epictetus, in the above alluſion to a game of chance or of ſkill.

If his inquiries led him to agree with the tenets that were held by a ſect of philoſophers about two thouſand years ago, he is the more confirmed in his notion; notwithſtanding the name of this ſect has become, in the gentility of modern times, proverbial for ſtupidity.

Cicero

* See Diſcourſes of Epictetus preſerved by Arrian, Book II. c. 5.

INTROD. Cicero in his mere ſpeculations was an Academic, and profeſſed indiſcriminate Scepticiſm: But, when he came to inſtruct his ſon in the duties of morality, he ſeized on the principles of the Stoic philoſophy, as the moſt applicable to the conduct of human life. From this ſource alſo the better part of the Roman law was derived; and, to ſuch decided diſtinction of right and wrong, juriſprudence muſt ever recur; as, in framing its rules, regard muſt be had to juſtice alone, whether the matter be of great or ſmall account.

Even in modern times, and at the diſtance of many ages, notwithſtanding the vulgar contempt, this ſect has been revered by thoſe who were acquainted with its real ſpirit, Lord Shafteſbury, Monteſquieu, Mr Harris, Mr Hutchiſon, and many others. And ſurely one of the firſt leſſons that ought to be learned by youth, however others may be paſt the time of learning it, is—Neither to admire nor to contemn what they do not know.

There is not perhaps in this collection any leading thought, or principle of moment, that may not be found in the writings of others; and, if the author knew *where*, he might have been as well employed in pointing them out as in compoſing this book: But the latter is perhaps the eaſier taſk of the two; and, as the concurrence of many in the ſame thoughts is not a preſumption of their falſehood, it is no reaſon why they ſhould be omitted here. The object is not novelty, but benefit to the ſtudent. The Author will not neglect citing thoſe who have gone before him, as often as he is ſenſible of having borrowed his thoughts, or as often as he recollects at the moment, that the ſtudent can with advantage be referred to other inſtructors.

The

The work conſiſts of two parts. The firſt relating to the Fact, or matter of deſcription, and ſtatement, in the hiſtory of man's progreſſive nature. The ſecond to the Principles of Right, or the foundations of judgement and choice, whether in matters of perſonal quality, law, manners, or political eſtabliſhments. INTROD.

The object, in theſe different parts reſpectively, is to aſcertain the foundations of power and of choice in human nature.

In entering on the firſt part, it appeared not unlikely to furniſh ſtriking and inſtructive views of the ſubject, to contemplate man as a mere part in this ſyſtem of living natures; and to indulge the mind in purſuing analogies which extend to him even from the lower orders of being, as well as to view him in his points of elevation and contraſt.

For this reaſon are ſtated, as in the firſt chapter of the following part, The diſtinction of natures living and active; and, among theſe, the diſtinction of animals aſſociating and political; which lead, by a thread of analogy, to man, diſtinguiſhed as he is by intelligence and the powers of obſervation and choice; and more eſpecially, by his deſtination to know himſelf, to perceive, in the frame of nature, intelligence ſuperior to his own, and to become his own maſter in the attainment of qualities that conſtitute the perfection of his being.

As the hiſtory of mind, with the laws of man's progreſſive nature, are to him primary objects of knowledge, and the foundations of that power which he is to exerciſe over himſelf, theſe are principal objects of conſideration, and furniſh the ſubjects of the ſecond and third chapters. With reſpect to theſe matters, however,

INTROD. ever, the facts are preſented not as diſcoveries, but as the data, from which to infer the judgements and concluſions of the ſecond part, relating to the foundations of choice, or what man ought to wiſh for himſelf, for his country, and for mankind.

The Author is ſenſible that a work of this ſort, to be properly executed, ought to be calculated, not for any particular claſs of readers, but for mankind. And, although he cannot flatter himſelf with the thoughts of having attained this high point of perfection, he is willing to hope, that, as his defects of one ſort may be forgiven by the learned; ſo his alluſions to abſtruſe points of ſcience, in treating the hiſtory of mind, or his quotations from antient languages, may, without any prejudice to the general ſtrain of his argument, be paſſed over by readers, to whom ſuch alluſions or quotations are not familiar: And he hopes that there may be enough beſides entitled to the candour, or within the competence, of every one who may be diſpoſed to peruſe his work.

PART

PRINCIPLES

OF

MORAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCE.

PART I.

Of the Fact, or of the moſt general Appearances in the Nature and State of Man.

CHAP. I.

OF MAN'S PLACE AND DESCRIPTION IN THE SCALE OF BEING.

SECTION I.

Of the Diſtinction of Living and Active Natures.

IT is a maxim in the ſcience of mechanics, that matter is equally inert, whether in motion or at reſt; that, having no principle of change in itſelf, it reſiſts every change impreſt; and that, upon this principle of mere reſiſtance, by which a body, being impelled, impels in the oppoſite direction, depend all the phenomena of mechaniſm in the action and reaction of bodies.

Whether the vertical movement and preſſure of bodies, which we call their weight, be not an exception to the foregoing rule, or whether there be not other affections, in which matter appears to be ſpontaneous, we ſhall not pretend to determine. It is ſufficient to obſerve that the ſubjects of mechaniſm, whether in a ſtate of reſt, of preſſure, or of actual motion, from whatever cauſe, reſiſt every change of place, of direction, or of acceleration; and that, in any change they undergo, we have no reaſon to aſcribe to them any function of life, appetite, averſion, or final intention, ſubſiſting in the body itſelf.

In this variety of material forms, it is the diſtinction of living natures to carry a principle of active exertion in themſelves. They are ſubject to preſſure from external cauſes, and are acted upon; but they alſo act, and urge to an end, whether to gain an advantage, or remove an inconvenience.

Inert matter is collected into maſs, and parts unite into a whole, by mere juxtapoſition. Bodies endued with a principle of life are organized, or made up of parts; which, though differing in ſubſtance, in or texture, as the hard, ſoft, fluid, fibrous, tubular, and ſo forth, are mutually ſubſervient to the purpoſe of life, and all of them adapted to their place and function in the aggregate maſs they compoſe. In ſuch ſyſtems as theſe, the ſubſtance is fleeting; ſuperfluous matter is diſcharged; freſh matter or nouriſhment is collected: During one period, the whole is made to wax or increaſe; during another, it is made to ſhrink or diſſolve; and, in its progreſs or decline, is made to grow, or to wear out at once, in all its parts.

This

This obſervation applies equally to the vegetable and animal kingdom. In the organization of a plant, the root, the ſtem, the foliage, the flower, and the ſeed, are combined into a ſyſtem. The firſt is fitted to penetrate the ſoil; the others to aſcend in the atmoſphere; and, as if ſtript of their gravitation or weight, preſs away from the earth in an oppoſite direction; and are all of them fitted to draw nutritive ſubſtance from the maſs that ſurrounds them, whether of ſoil, air, or light.

Vegetables aſſimilate to their own reſpective natures the ſubſtance with which they are nouriſhed; and, whilſt they ſeem to work for themſelves alone, actually fit up materials for the ſupport of a different order of beings.

The function of vegetating life terminates in the growth or decline of the individual, and in the propagation of the ſpecies. Every plant has a limited range, over which he can diſtribute his foliage and roots; farther is incapable of changing his place; and, even in this, does not appear to act from will.

The firſt diſtinction of animal nature appears in will, and in the exemption from the local bondage of plants. In this order of being, there are periods of growth and decline, an aſſumption of nouriſhment, and a diſcharge of ſuperfluous matter, analogous to what was obſerved among vegetables: There is an organization or combination of parts fitted to perform theſe functions, analogous to the roots and foliage of plants; but the animal prepared for motion, or change of place, carries his roots in a portable form, and wrapt up in himſelf. He goes in ſearch of his food; and, whether from obſervation or inſtinctive direction, ſelects what is fit for his purpoſe.

The

PART I. CHAP. I. SECT. I.

The bodies of animals are fitted by their ſtructure to the indefinite variety of ſcenes in which their food is to be found, and to an indefinite variety of exertion which their lot requires them to make. Some live immerſed in the waters; others fly in the air, live on the ſurface of the earth, burrow in the ground, or affect an intermediate ſtate among the branches of trees or ſummits of rocks.

In all the animals there is a fitneſs for ſome ſpecies of action, and a diſpoſition to engage in it; and, in many, there is a diſpoſition to employ the active powers, with which they are furniſhed, for recreation and ſport, as well as for the ſupply of their wants. They have their times of exertion and repoſe; and entire kinds are diſtinguiſhed by the degrees in which they are unequally addicted to one, or to the other. If the ſhell-fiſh on the ſhore perform no viſible action, but that of opening or cloſing his ſhell to receive the brine that accommodates, or to exclude the foul matter that annoys, him; there are other animals that in the oppoſite extreme, are active, and for whom nature ſeems to adminiſter the means of ſupply merely as a reſtorative of that ſtrength, which they are ſo freely to waſte in the ſeemingly ſportive or violent exerciſes to which they are diſpoſed.

Next to voluntary change of place, another and a higher diſtinction of animals is, their ſenſibility, or capacity of enjoyment and ſuffering, joined to a purpoſe of action, regulated by theſe conſiderations. We are apt to appropriate enjoyment to the intervals of reſt which the animal nature, in every inſtance, more or leſs requires; and ſuppoſe pleaſure a condition of mere inactive ſenſation: But it cannot be doubted that the higher ſpecies of animals enjoy or have pleaſure alſo in the active exertion of their powers,

powers; elſe, from what ſhould proceed the ardour with which the dog and the horſe neglect their food and their paſture, to run the courſe of their ſpecies in the midſt of hardſhips and toils. They are, without doubt, by nature inclined to employ the organs, with which they are furniſhed, to the peculiar effects which theſe organs ſerve to obtain. In following this diſpoſition, they diſplay and improve the beauty of their reſpective forms; and then ſuggeſt the higheſt conceptions of wiſdom in the author of their frame, when they exhibit, in full exertion of force, the limbs and organs of which they are poſſeſt.

Animals are furniſhed with inſtinctive principles of ſelf preſervation, in the pain by which they are appriſed of what is hurtful, in the pleaſure which allures them to what is ſalutary, in the caution with which they approach any appearances that are dangerous or ſtrange; and, moſt of all, in the horror that affects them at any thing that carries the aſpect of death: Yet, in many of the nobler animals, every principle of this ſort appears to be ſuſpended, as often as the occaſion of great active exertion is preſented. On ſuch occaſions, to a certain extent, the ardour and intenſity of the effort ſeems to increaſe the pleaſure it gives; and, as difficulty, danger, and hardſhip, require a proportional increaſe of ardour and force, they ſeem to increaſe the enjoyment alſo, and render an animal that is inured to the moſt difficult taſk, proportionably indifferent to what would exerciſe his powers, but in a lower degree. It is thus that the hound, which has been broke to the chaſe of the wolf, or the boar, will ſcarcely deign to purſue the hare or the fox.

As the difficulties, which an animal encounters in the exertion of his powers, are likely to be greateſt, where they are met in oppoſition by equal powers of the ſame kind, animals appear to delight

light in meaſuring their force and addreſs one with another, and ſeek for occaſions of oppoſition and conteſt, not only in the competition ſubſiſting between individuals of a different, or hoſtile kind, but alſo between individuals of the ſame ſpecies.

The diſpoſition of an animal to conteſt and ſtruggle is thus often free from hoſtility; and the very fondling of creatures in the beſt terms with each other is an image of war. They have their emulations on the points of dexterity and ſtrength, to which they are ever ready to ſacrifice their eaſe and their ſafety. The ſports they ſeem to delight in the moſt, are a game in which life itſelf is at ſtake, and in which toil, dilaceration, and wounds, are the lot even of the gainer.

Nature, in theſe inſtances, appears to diſregard the ſafety and peace of her works, and to adopt a deſtructive policy; but the deſtination of animal life to have an end, is not peculiarly marked in theſe examples. The parts that meet in the organization of each living frame are deſtined, after a certain period, to return into the elements from which they were collected, and the powers of life, that waxed for a while, come at laſt to wear out in their mere exertions; nor can we derive any peculiar ground of cenſure againſt the order of nature, from the approaches of death, in this or any other particular form, where every part of the ſyſtem terminates in the ſame effect.

The Author of nature has not, in any inſtance, provided for perpetuity in the life of any plant or animal. He has indeed furniſhed the animal with principles of ſelf-preſervation, tending to ſuſpend his doom, and to prolong his being for an indefinite period, but too feeble forever to reſiſt the violence of that general ſtream on which he is borne to his end.

This

This itſelf is the order of things in which we muſt revere the arm of power that removes the fleeting generations of plants and animals, no leſs than the creative hand that provides a continual ſupply of new generations to perpetuate the race.

In mere animals, incapable of reflection, this deſtination is not any cauſe of diſtreſs. In ſuch as do, or may reflect on their lot, it is an admonition that the value of life is to be eſtimated from the good it contains, not from the length of its period.

The life of an oak, in ſome inſtances, extends beyond the record of human tranſactions; of other plants the duration is limited by the ſun's declination from one to the other tropic. The period of animal life is alſo conſiderably varied. In the elephant, we are told it amounts to two hundred years; in the fly, that ſhews ſo briſk an alacrity in the ſun, it is ſuppoſed to begin and to end in the compaſs of a day: But the ſentence of nature is equally pronounced upon all, That the longeſt liver muſt die.

The boaſt of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave *.

If from this we are diſpoſed to collect any inference adverſe to the purſuits of glory, it may be aſked, Whither do the paths of ignominy lead? If to the grave alſo, then our choice of a life remains to be made on the grounds of its intrinſic value, without regard to an end, which is common to every ſpecies of life we can lead, whether illuſtrious or obſcure.

* Gray's Elegy on a Country Churchyard.

SECTION II.

Of the Diſtinction of Animals Aſſociating and Political.

PART I. CHAP. I. SECT. II.

AMONG the varieties of the animal kingdom, ſome are ſaid to be aſſociating or gregarious, others ſolitary.

We find the foundation of this diſtinction, not in the abſolute ſeparation of the individual, in any one ſpecies, from every other individual of the ſame ſpecies, nor in the continual aſſembling of all the individuals together; but in the leſs or greater frequency of their concourſe, and their ordinary or occaſional connection one with another.

All nature indeed is connected; and the world itſelf conſiſts of parts, which, like the ſtones of an arch, mutually ſupport and are ſupported.

This order of things conſiſts of movements, which, in a ſtate of counteraction and apparent diſturbance, mutually regulate and balance one another. Elements that ſink by their weight are raiſed by evaporation; the hardeſt bodies are ſubject to diſſolution; or, in the form of duſt ſuſpended in water or air, partake in the volubility of theſe fluids. Vapours raiſed from the ſurface of the ſea are wafted over land by the winds; and the clouds

clouds which they form, under various changes of temperature, are made to diſcharge part of their moiſture, to nouriſh the race of plants and animals.

The deſcending fluid, that would penetrate the pores of the earth to its centre, is intercepted by impenetrable ſtrata of rock or of clay, from which it guſhes on the declivity of hills, in the form of ſprings; and deſcends in rivulets and ſtreams to the ocean, from which it is again raiſed, to burſt upon the earth in rain and ſtorms.

Thus what appears a war of the elements is the peace of that world they compoſe: The winds are inſtruments of beneficence; rain and ſnow are the gifts of bounty; what ſeems to be irregular is the perfection of order; the rugged crag and broken hill give a ſheltered receſs to many inhabitants, and, in all their aſperity, fit up the reſidence of animals, and adorn the proſpect to man.

As the movement of parts in nature conſpires to the preſervation and well-being of the whole; as the larger compartments are fitted to their place in the general arrangement; ſo, in every ſubdiviſion, there is a ſpecific economy and relation, verifying, in every claſs or ſpecies of being, the predilection of nature for combination and mutual ſubſerviency in the members of which the claſs is compoſed.

In the vegetable, as well as animal kingdom, generations are ſucceſſively derived one from another; and the individual in every generation or age, is foſtered and protected by the preſence of his ſpecies. The proſperity of animals, in their different ways

of life, reſults, more or leſs, from the co-operation of numbers together.

Among the animals in general, and ſuited to the condition of their ſenſitive nature, the ſpecies or kind is to the individual an object of inſtinctive attachment. And the participation of fellow-creatures together, is required to complete the enjoyments which they are ſeverally qualified to receive.

The mutual diſpoſition of the ſexes, the affections of parent and young, are common almoſt to every deſcription of animals. In ſome inſtances, indeed, the connection of the ſexes is merely occaſional, and that of parent and young of comparatively ſhort duration; inſomuch that, after a certain period of ſolicitude on the part of the parent, and dependence on the part of the young, the adult, in one claſs of the animals, affects ſolitude, and appears to ſtate his fellow creature, even his parent, or his offspring, rather as a competitor and a rival, than as an aſſociate or a friend.

Such animals are ſaid to be ſolitary.

It is however more common, in the animal kingdom, for individuals of a ſpecies to haunt the ſame places together.

The group, as well as the ſpecies, has its ſeparate name, whether of herd, flock, ſhoal, covey, ſwarm, company, or ſociety; which is appropriated to the different orders of beaſts, birds, inſects, or fiſhes, and never, but by a ſpecies of figure, transferred from one to another. Among theſe, the term ſociety is appropriated to ſome collective body of men; and it is always by a ſpecies of figure, that beaſts are ſaid to aſſociate, or men to herd with one another.

Animals

Animals of this deſcription, though different in the manner and amount of their connections, as they agree in the general circumſtances of being commonly found in troops, or certain numbers together, they are ſaid, in contradiſtinction to animals of the former claſs to be aſſociating or gregarious.

Of theſe, ſome are obſerved merely to herd or aſſemble, with little or no appearance of co-operation, or diſtribution of taſks, to be performed for any common advantage. Such are many of the birds that flock, and of the paſturing quadrupeds that herd, together, as the deer, the horſe, the cow, the ſheep, the goat; which, though they do no more than merely paſture together, are not to be kept aſſunder without reſtraint or violence. Such are termed merely gregarious.

Others are obſerved to combine their labours for a common purpoſe; to diſtribute their taſks, and aſſign to different members of the community, the parts which they are required to perform; ſuch, among the quadrupeds, is the beaver; and, among the inſects, where examples of this ſort are moſt frequent, the ant, the waſp, the bee, and many others.

Theſe, in the tranſlation of an elegant title beſtowed upon them by Ariſtotle, may be termed the gregarious and political *.

Under this laſt deſignation, we are ſurely authoriſed by the fact to comprehend the ſpecies of man. Wherever there is a plurality of men, there is alſo a ſociety; and, in ſociety, there is a diſtribution of parts, and a co-operation of many, to ſome common purpoſe or end.

That

* Ζωον Αγελαιον και Πολιτικον.

That man is found in ſociety cannot be queſtioned ; that he was ſo originally, or that he is by any amicable diſpoſition attached to his kind, has become matter of doubt and of controverſy.

In deciding this queſtion, parties look forward to conſequences; and, having already made choice of their inference, admit or reject even fact itſelf, in proportion as they conceive it to be favourable or adverſe to the concluſion they would form.

According to the ſyſtem of one of theſe parties, the human ſpecies, though now every where joined in ſociety, and often ſeemingly at peace, yet every where retains the marks of a condition originally different, if not the reverſe ; elſe, why, in the moſt pacific ſocieties, does the citizen think it neceſſary to fence in, or to ſecure his dwelling? Againſt whom does he provide his locks and his bars? From whom do the rich ſo carefully conceal their treaſures? Are men ſo much alarmed in the neighbourhood of aſſociates and friends? Or, do they not rather betray a conſciouſneſs of mutual diſtruſt and hoſtility, apprehending in every neighbour, a ſpy, or a robber, prepared to betray or to plunder?

Why, in the moſt peaceful ſocieties, is the magiſtrate armed; and the very badge of authority a ſword of ſtate, or an inſtrument of violence and an object of terror? Whence is it that nations need ſo much arrangement, to preſerve the peace at home, or to repel invaſions from abroad? For whom are priſons erected, or an apparatus of fetters, chains, and engines of torture provided? Is the executioner of juſtice a fit link in the chain of friends and confederates? Whence, on every frontier, are ſtrong holds erected, and military ſtations ſelected with ſo much care? Are theſe preparations made for the reception of friends from abroad?

abroad? Or do they not rather betray a conviction, that, beyond the circle, in which men have procured ſome artificial means of tranquillity, they have nothing to expect but hoſtility and war.

In anſwer to theſe queries, we muſt admit, that the peace of ſociety is, in many inſtances, evidently forced, and made to continue by a variety of artificial means.

When we look back to the hiſtory of times paſt, the weak appear to have been driven in herds together, as a common prey to the ſtrong, or to have been forced into leagues and confederacies for common defence. The league, while it continues, is far from being ſecure; and the parties, but little at eaſe in this condition, ever ready to quarrel or diſband. The preſſure of war from abroad, we are told, was required to ſtill the diſſention of parties, and unite the citizens of Rome together. Without this compreſſing cauſe, the bundle of rods, a childiſh emblem of union, tied round the ſhaft of the axe, or inſtrument of force and of terror, would have had little effect in uniting the minds of ſuch a people together.

But from ſuch topics as theſe, we can infer no more, than that men, though by nature in ſociety, have a choice of the good or the ill incident to their ſtate: That individuals are ſometimes diſpoſed to abuſe the advantages of neighbourhood, and to break the peace: That examples of this ſort, whether few or many, require the inſtitution of government, and the application of penal law: And, from the whole, it follows, that, although man is deſtined to live with his fellow-creatures, and muſt, upon this account be claſſed with the gregarious animals, yet parties may agree, or be at variance;

riance; and the individual, having it in his choice to be a good or an ill member of the ſociety to which he belongs, muſt incur all the conſequences of a choice well or ill made.

To be in ſociety is the phyſical ſtate of the ſpecies, not the moral diſtinction of any particular man. It is the ſtate of thoſe who quarrel, as well as of thoſe who agree. Eſtrangement is not always a vice, nor aſſociation a virtue. Perſons may aſſemble for conteſt, as well as for concord. And there are few individuals who have not their enemies as well as their friends: But, in the choice of friendſhip and enmity, the taſk of human wiſdom begins, and is there only properly exerciſed, where the good of ſociety is matter of free choice, not of neceſſity, nor even of invariable inſtinct.

In the congregation of mere animals, the motives to union on the one hand, or the occaſions of ſtrife, on the other, are comparatively few, inſtinctive, and ſimple: The troops they compoſe are uniform in their manner; herds merely paſturing together; or ſwarms, in the manner of a family, united under a common parent or head, and co-operating in the performance of the ſame work together.

In human nature, the aſſociating principle is combined with a variety of conſiderations and circumſtances, which lead mankind to vary their forms indefinitely, whether in reſpect to the numbers that compoſe their ſociety, the direction under which a community is to act, or the object to which it is chiefly directed.

The name of ſociety may be given to a mere family, a tribe, a ſelect company of friends, and to a nation or empire. Of theſe, each is an aſſemblage of men; and the greater ſtill comprehends many

many examples of the leſs. The principles that operate throughout are conſiſtent, and, in order to form a complete eſtimate of man's aſſociating nature, require to be enumerated, and conſidered apart. In this enumeration, we may have the advantage, not of ſpectators merely obſerving the external appearances, from which to conjecture the cauſe; but, we may have the advantage alſo of parties concerned, intimately acquainted with the motives to action, from which theſe effects proceed.

SECTION III.

Of the Principles of Society in Human Nature.

PART. I. CHAP. I. SECT. III.

THE general combination of parts in the ſyſtem of nature; the mutual ſubſerviency of different orders of being on this globe; the natural attachment of individuals, in every ſpecies of living creature, to ſome others of their kind; and the frequency of gregarious and political aſſemblage in the deſcription of different animals, muſt greatly facilitate the admiſſion of ſociety as a part in the deſtination of man; or indeed, joined to the fact that men are actually found in ſociety, render argument on the ſubject of his qualification for ſuch a ſtate entirely ſuperfluous.

The purpoſe of what follows on this ſubject, therefore, is rather to ſpecify the character of human ſociety, than to evince its reality, as the ſtate or condition in which man is deſtined to act.

In a mixed ſcene of benevolence and malice, it is indeed of importance to determine how far man is, by his nature, limited to one or to the other; or how far he is equally ſuſceptible of either; and deeply concerned in the one, as a good which he ought to chuſe, and in the other, as an evil which he ought to avoid.

Authors, admitting the reality of man's actual place in ſociety, have endeavoured to collect the appearances which mark his fit-

neſs or unfitneſs for this condition, in order to determine, each in his own way, the much agitated queſtion relating to the ſtate of nature.

Theſe appearances highly merit our attention; they ſerve to characteriſe the ſpecies to which we belong, and the ſcenes in which we ourſelves are deſtined to act; they may be collected from any of the tranſactions of men, whether in co-operation or oppoſition; the firſt, in the caſe of families, tribes, companies, nations, and empires; the ſecond, in the rivalſhip or competition of parties, whether ſingle men, or communities.

Families may be conſidered as the elementary forms of ſociety, or eſtabliſhments the moſt indiſpenſably neceſſary to the exiſtence and preſervation of the kind. As families may exiſt apart, and without any neceſſary communication of one group with another, ſo they ſtill continue to be formed, in whatever numbers mankind may be leagued into larger communities: They are the nurſeries of men; the baſis of empires, as well as of nations and tribes; and the compartments of which the greateſt fabrics of political eſtabliſhment are compoſed: So that, however little we may need information on the ſubject of family connections, it is material to have in our view the principles on which they are formed, as the conſtituents of a ſocial character, indelible in every age and in every ſtate of ſociety, whether voluntary or forced.

In families, no doubt, the firſt occaſion or motive to union is the mutual inclination of the ſexes; a diſpoſition which is known to ſuſpend, or to exceed in force, every other affection or paſſion of the human mind. Its effects, in particular inſtances, is an excluſive attachment of the parties, not like the correſponding diſpoſition in the other animals, merely periodical and temporary,

but a foundation of continual ſociety, extending to all times and ſeaſons; the reſult of it, in the general hiſtory of mankind, is ſuch as to have rendered ſome inſtitution of marriage univerſal or common. In this inſtitution, the relation of huſband and wife is accompanied with that of parent and child; and the increaſe of numbers is procured without conſulting the mind, or the intention of the parties. This effect is, to the race, what the vital motion of the heart is to the individual; too neceſſary to the preſervation of nature's works, to be entruſted to the precarious will or intention of thoſe moſt nearly concerned.

That the birth of a man is more painful and hazardous; that the ſtate of his infancy is more helpleſs, and of longer duration, than is exemplified in the caſe of any other ſpecies, may be ranked with the apparent comparative defects of his animal nature: But this circumſtance, we may venture to affirm, like many others of his ſeeming defects, is of a piece with that ſuperior deſtination, which remains to be fulfilled in the ſubſequent hiſtory of mankind.

His birth is marked with circumſtances that make a deep impreſſion in the parent's breaſt: It is at once a delivery from anxiety, danger, and pain: It is an acquiſition, of which the value is indefinite, and fondly enhanced: It is the opening of a new bloſſom of hope in a breaſt ſtill trembling with fear, and awake to every ſentiment of tender concern, ſolicitude, and love.

The only effort of the child, or all he can do for himſelf, is to raiſe the feeble cry of diſtreſs, in which he announces at once the glad tidings of life, and his need of aſſiſtance; and his cry is more powerful to obtain this aſſiſtance, than the moſt vigorous exertions of which the young of other animals, at their entry in-

to life, are capable; it reaches the ear and the heart of thoſe who have means, underſtanding, and power, fitted to ſupply the relief which is wanted, and who continue through life to ſeek the advantage of their child, in preference to any intereſt of their own.

Were the infant capable of obſerving the ſtate to which he is born, he would find himſelf confederate in a league, to which, beſides the pleaſure of ſerving him, he contributes nothing. His inability to make any return, however, but intereſts, the more, a tender affection, of which he is the object; and the ſolicitude he brings, ſerves but to rivet that affection, by the continued repetition of its cares.

His firſt ſmile of complacency, and his firſt attempts to cling, with an appearance of predilection, to the breaſt that ſupports him, are an ample reward for all the pains which his birth, or his preſervation, has occaſioned. No one has yet been ſo bold as to maintain, that, in this inſtance, the human heart is incapable of love, and formed alone for intereſted connections: That a mother, in preſenting the breaſt to her child, has a view only to ſome future returns of advantage to herſelf.

If, in this relation, the period of anxiety, on the part of the parent, and of dependence or weakneſs, on the part of the young, be prolonged beyond the time that is uſual in the caſe of other animals, theſe ſeeming diſadvantages are more than compenſated in the pleaſure which a parent enjoys from the continuation of his cares, and in the effect of a dependence, which is the germ of that ſocial connection, which man is deſtined to have with his kind, in a much higher form than is known in any other ſpecies of animals.

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The infant's grounds of connection with his parents, in the earlier period of life, is that of being placed in their hands, and in a relation with them, from which he cannot recede. He is born in ſociety, and, while unconſcious of benefit or wrong, is anxiouſly preſerved in his ſtate. When he begins to perceive his condition, and is in any meaſure left to chooſe for himſelf; he is ever at the heel of his parent, and dreads being left behind as the moſt fatal misfortune. At every interval of ſeparation, he longs to recover the company in which he was born, and feels, through life, whatever may affect the honour or welfare of his family, as the moſt ſerious concern of his own.

Before the force of the firſt family affection is ſpent, relations multiply, and inſtinctive attachments grow into habit. Brothers and ſiſters come to co-operate in the ſame cauſe together; and a third generation ſometimes appears, before the ſecond or the third are ſeparated from the original ſtock: Collaterals grow up together, ſtill appriſed of their relation; and, even when ſeparated, are taught to regard conſanguinity as a bond of connection, which extends beyond the limits of acquaintance or perſonal intercourſe of any ſort.

It is thus that the ſuppoſed deſcendants of a race are multiplied into a tribe, in which many families are included, adopting ſome common point of honour, or ſome common cauſe, in which the kindred partake.

Under this denomination of a tribe or clan, numbers of men are leagued together, and often endeared by the experience of affection, fidelity, and courage; while they mutually ſupport and are ſupported, or run the career of fortune together.

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The tenderneſs of parents had a ſpecific name in the language of the Greeks *. In ours, it is termed natural affection, as being peculiarly inſpired by nature, and precluding even the choice of its object.

Natural affection ſprings up in the ſoul, as the milk ſprings in the mother's breaſt to furniſh a nouriſhment to her child. Whether piety in the child be natural, in the ſame ſenſe, may be queſtioned. He clings indeed to the parent's breaſt, or ſhrinks from a ſtranger: But theſe are, perhaps, no more than the firſt efforts of ſelf preſervation, in which he abides by that which he has experienced to be friendly or ſafe, and declines, as doubtful, what is ſtrange or unknown: And habit may confirm the predilection he has formed, while he continues to apprehend, in the perſon of his parent, the ſource of every comfort of which he has any experience, or which he is any way qualified to receive.

That the relation of conſanguinity, beyond that of brother and ſiſter, at leaſt, operates as a mere occaſion of acquaintance, intimacy, and co-operation in the ſame cauſe together, is ſtill leſs ſuſceptible of doubt. Relations are attached, or are at variance, according as their humours agree; but the ſpirit of clanſhip, which is ſo frequent in human nature, abundantly proves a diſpoſition in man to avail himſelf of every pretence, upon which he can league with thoſe among whom his lot and his acquaintance has fallen.

Company is the ſolace of human life; and, it will not be diſputed that, in the abſence of every intereſted deſign, companions meet

* Στοργη.

meet from a common diſlike of ſolitude, or a common inclination to the ſame purſuits and occupations; nor will it be doubted that, from mere acquaintance, perſons tried in fidelity, affection, and good underſtanding, actually become friends, on the moſt permanent foundations of attachment and confidence.

The love of company is a principle common to man with all the gregarious animals. So far, it is merely inſtinctive, and gratified indiſcriminately in the preſence of a fellow-creature of the ſame ſpecies. Animals, endowed with this inſtinct, will force their way through every impediment to join the herd they affect; but, beyond the mere concourſe of numbers, rarely appear to have any ſelection or choice.

With man, the fact is different: He is ever diſpoſed to ſelect his company, and to ſhun, as well as to embrace, an acquaintance. The characters of men are unequal; and the choice of one frequently implies the rejection of another. But, to ſelect a companion, or a friend, is not to be unſociable: It is to affect ſociety, but to know the diſtinction of good and evil in this important connection.

As men have a greater extent and variety of concerns, whether miſtaken or real, in which their purſuits may interfere; ſo they have more frequent occaſions of ſtrife than are incident to individuals of any other ſpecies of gregarious animals. What we term reaſon in man, or intelligence ſo imperfect as his, is more liable than inſtinct to err, and miſtake its objects. Hence offences are taken and given, and the minds of men alienated from one another, upon imaginary, as well as upon real grounds of diſlike.

Mere eſtrangement approaches to jealouſy; and men do not deſire to aſſociate with perſons entirely unknown. Hence the

ſpecies

ſpecies is never obſerved to act in one, but in manifold troops and companies; and, although without any phyſical bar to prevent their union, are ſtill obſerved, under the notion of independence and freedom, to affect ſeparation.

Hence the multiplicity of hordes in barbarous ages: But, in human nature, ſeparation itſelf has an effect in ſtraitening the bands of ſociety; for the members of each ſeparate nation feel their connection the more, that the name of fellow-countryman ſtands in contradiſtinction to that of an alien.

In this divided ſtate of the world incompatible intereſts are formed, or, at leaſt, apprehended; and the members of different ſocieties are engaged on oppoſite ſides; affection to one ſociety becomes animoſity to another; and they are not always to be reckoned of the moſt ſociable diſpoſition who equally fawn upon all. Indifference, more than candour, is likely to produce the appearance of impartiality, when the cauſe of our friend, or our country, is at ſtake.

Even here, however, what ſeems to divide the ſpecies tends alſo to unite them in leagues more extenſive than they would otherwiſe form. Hence the coalition of families, tribes, and extenſive tracts of country, into nations, under political eſtabliſhments, that combine the ſtrength and the reſources of many for common protection and ſafety.

The love of company is gratified in the reſorts of a few; and predilection ever implies acquaintance and eſteem: But national eſtabliſhments far exceed theſe bounds; and comprehend, in the ſame ſtate or community, perſons far removed from one another, and mutually unknown.

Nations are formed upon a principle of expediency, and to obtain ſecurity againſt foreign enemies, or domeſtic diſorders: But, notwithſtanding this origin, the name of a country ever carries an object of the warmeſt affection; hence the ardent enthuſiaſm, with which the good citizen ſacrifices, to a public cauſe, every perſonal conſideration of eaſe, profit, or ſafety.

The progreſs of national enlargement, by increaſe of people, or ſucceſſive annexations of territory, is not reſtricted within any ſpecial limits. Ambition often leads the growing ſtate to extend its dimenſions far beyond any real advantage: And, in the reſult of war, communities, once proud of their ſeparate eſtabliſhments, and the luſtre of their hiſtory, are made to diſcontinue their own inſtitutions, and to receive the laws, by which they are governed, from abroad.

When provinces, remote from one another, without any national intercourſe, participation of language, manners, or intereſt, are reduced to acknowledge a common head, or to join in their contributions to enrich a common maſter; the aſſociating principle, in ſuch examples, if we muſt call it by that name, is force, or rather the ambition of ſovereigns, than the will of the people, or even the intereſts of ſtate. Upon this principle, the inhabitants of cities and territories, unknown to one another, become fellow ſubjects, and owe their connection to the force by which they were ſubdued, and by which they are kept in ſubjection: But this force itſelf was the combination of numbers employed in conqueſt.

The conquered become an acceſſion to empire, in which nations are abſorbed, or changed into provinces that have no feeling of attachment,

tachment, nor even community of intereſt. But, if empires thus extend beyond the limits to which the ſocial affections of man have reached, theſe affections nevertheleſs continue to ſubſiſt in different diviſions of the largeſt dominion. They ſubſiſt in the family, in the neighbourhood, in the ſelect company of acquaintance, and in the attachment of friends. There even ariſes, in the largeſt empires, a national ſpirit, with which the ſubject cordially ſerves his ſovereign, and contends for the honour and ſafety of his country.

The mind of man has a fellow-feeling with what befals a fellow creature, which is ſo much conceived as an appurtenance of human nature, as, in common language, to be called humanity, and conſidered as a characteriſtic of the ſpecies. Under the effects of this diſpoſition, even to be a ſtranger is a recommendation, and a ground of regard.

Much remains to be obſerved on this ſubject, that cannot be claſſed with the appurtenances of mere animal nature. Where man riſes above this predicament, his deſtination to range with a ſyſtem, and make a part in a comprehenſive order of things, becomes ſtill more conſpicuous. His underſtanding is a power of comprehenſion, qualifying him to perceive, and to eſtimate the bearings of a whole, through all its parts, to ſome common end, or beneficial effect; and his moral judgements give ſanction to the propriety of his own character or action, in the ſociety of his fellow creatures. The great diſtinction of right and wrong, of virtue and vice, on which men experience ſuch extremes of complacence or indignation, of eſteem or contempt, is formed on the dictates of a ſocial diſpoſition, which receives, with favour and love, what conſtitutes the good of mankind, or rejects, with diſapprobation and abhorrence, what is of a contrary nature.

Man's ſpecific talent for expreſſion and communication, alſo, notwithſtanding the diverſity of tongues, which, with other circumſtances, contributes to keep ſeparate hordes in a ſtate of eſtrangement from one another, ſerves, upon the whole, to reunite the efforts of mankind to one common purpoſe of advancement in the progreſs of intelligence. The lights of ſcience are communicated, from the parts in which they ſprang up, to the remoteſt corners of the habitable world. The works of ſingular genius are a common benefit to mankind; and the whole ſpecies, on every quarter, in every nation, and in every age, co-operates together for one common end of information, invention, ſcience, and art. No one member of this great body is detached from the whole, or can enjoy his good, or ſuffer his evil, without ſome participation with others.

SECTION IV.

Of the Intercourſe and Communication of Animals, and of the Language of Man.

ANIMALS, where individuals interfere, or aſſociate with one another, ever have ſome power of expreſſion. Every dam has a call for her young; and in every flock or herd, there are ſigns that bring numbers together, ſigns of enjoyment or ſuffering, of deſire or averſion; and, even among rivals and enemies, there are ſigns of alarm, of defiance, or rage.

So far, individuals almoſt of every ſpecies, communicate one with another. The living frame, in every part that compoſes it, and in every movement of which it is ſuſceptible, bears the character of life, and ſpontaneous effort, of which the mereſt animals are mutually ſenſible.

The human figure, in a ſpecial degree, by every action, and every geſture, is ſignificant of meaning and will: The power of interpretation correſponds to the power of expreſſion; and men are qualified to underſtand what they are by nature diſpoſed to expreſs. Every one is diſpoſed to communicate what he thinks, and to receive communication of what is thought by others.

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The means, of whatever kind, employed in the intercourſe of perſons, may be comprehended under the deſignation of language. In this general uſe of the term, the ſign of a meaning or will, though no way reſembling the thing ſignified, is in ſome inſtances fixed by nature, employed ſpontaneouſly, and underſtood or interpreted, by virtue of an original faculty, correſponding to the inſtinct which leads to the uſe of it, and equally prior to experience or inſtruction of any ſort. Of this kind are looks and geſtures, changes of colour, and tones of the voice, which proceed from what is paſſing in the mind of one perſon, and make it known to another, without any previous convention or agreement of the parties ſo to expreſs themſelves, or to be ſo underſtood. The ſmile and the frown are untaught and unpremeditated expreſſions of pleaſure and diſpleaſure. They are underſtood by the infant at the breaſt, and returned by him, before he has any knowledge of the organs, or features, on which they are traced. To the lateſt hour of human life, every paſſion, and every affection, give outward ſigns of their exiſtence, and often betray a ſtate of the mind, which the party concerned would wiſh to conceal.

Many actions of men, by a natural connection with their motives, diſcover a meaning, as an effect diſcovers its cauſe. Here, indeed, the ſign is affixed in the nature of things; but the interpretation is often to be learned from experience, and is the reſult of peculiar ſagacity, not of mere inſtinct, as in the former inſtances, in which tones of voice, or features of the countenance, are, by appointment of nature, expreſſive of ſentiment or thought. Thus, when the huſbandmen is ſeen to break up his lea, he is underſtood to intend a crop of corn. When a general moves with his army, he is underſtood to have ſome deſign of attack or retreat. But

the interpretation, in either caſe, is not merely inſtinctive, but an effort of ſagacity tutored by experience.

Language may be divided into three principal parts, viz. mute ſigns, ſpeech, and written characters. Of the firſt we may obſerve the effects in every pantomime, in which, without a ſingle accent of ſound, the beginning, middle, and end of a fable, are completely made known. The Engliſh Harlequin is condemned to dumb ſhew, but has no occaſion for words, nor even for looks. He performs in ſilence, and even in a maſk. His geſtures, his approaches, flights, and diſguiſes, are ſufficient to expreſs the paſſions of fondneſs or fear, by which he is agitated, and to give warning of the evaſions and tricks he is meditating.

Such natural ſigns, and inſtinctive or conjectural interpretations, may be conſidered as the original ſtock which nature has furniſhed to man, and with which he may proceed in concerting more arbitrary ſigns of ſpeech, or of written characters, thereby to extend the means of communication, and enable him to expreſs himſelf more fully, on all the ſubjects of obſervation, or thought.

In thus proceeding to enlarge the fund of expreſſion, by adding the uſe of ſpeech to the ſtock of inſtinctive or natural ſigns, the principle of life in man, by whatever name we may call it, of mind, or intelligence, has occaſion to ſhew an extent or variety of powers, and to produce, in a form obvious to ſenſe, a multiplicity of ſtores, whether of conception, ſentiment, or will, greatly exceeding what any of the other animals appear to poſſeſs.

In the uſe of this wonderful expedient, man is enabled to name every ſubject in nature, and to mark its relations; or, by mere inflections of ſound, to expreſs the modifications of thought, ſentiment, and will to a degree of ſubtlety

or nice diſcrimination, in numberleſs parts, which it becomes difficult for the grammarian, or the metaphyſician, to arrange under the titles to which they reſpectively belong.

Such are the effects of language, when extended to the uſe of conventional ſigns, whether of ſpeech or of written characters. With reſpect to its origin and hiſtory, a variety of queſtions may occur.

1*ſt*, Whether ſpeech be peculiar to man? This queſtion we may venture to anſwer in the affirmative: For, although other animals learn from him to articulate ſounds, and thereby ſhew that there is not any abſolute inability of their organs for this purpoſe; yet, they have not the meaning affixed to the ſounds they articulate. And, if ſome animals, without being able to articulate, take the meaning of words, as the dog or the horſe knows his name, and obeys the command of his maſter; yet we cannot, by any means, admit that they are fitted to partake with man, in the formation or uſe of language.

Another queſtion may be, Whether ſpeech be natural to man?

The uſe of his voice, in the expreſſion of ſentiment or paſſion, no doubt, is natural, as are alſo many other modes of expreſſion by change of colour, looks, and geſtures; but that he has artificially extended the catalogue of ſigns, no one can doubt, eſpecially in diſtinguiſhing ſounds by articulation, and in multiplying words to expreſs the indefinite variety of things, of thoughts, ſentiments, and intentions. He might poſſibly have wrought in the ſame manner, and, as the dumb are actually known to do, on the original ſtock of ſignificant geſture or mute ſigns: But the voice and the organs of ſpeech and of hearing, have ſo many advanta-

ges over other means of expreſſion, that they were likely to prevail; to become the favourite, and in ſome ſort the natural engine of communication.

In the uſe of articulate ſounds, the variation of ſigns is effected with the greateſt facility, and with the greateſt quickneſs of ſucceſſion; the medium of the air in which ſound is produced, is always preſent, and conveys it in every direction; the organ of hearing is ever open to receive the impreſſion, has great ſenſibility and diſcriminating power; at the ſame time that the pronunciation of words may be accompanied with action, geſture, or viſible ſign of any ſort: So that we may clearly perceive the ground of that preference which mankind have univerſally given to the practice of ſpeech, without ſuppoſing it otherwiſe natural, than as it is obviouſly expedient and recommended by its uſe.

It may nevertheleſs be queſtioned by ſome, whether the uſe of the tongue, ſo univerſal to mankind, be not inſtinctive.

To utter ſound, in expreſſion of meaning, is no doubt inſtinctive to man, as to moſt of the other animals that breathe the air of the atmoſphere. But inſtinct is uniform in its effects; and if ſpeech were inſtinctive, we ſhould have all mankind ſpeak the ſame language, as every bird of the ſame ſpecies has the ſame call, and repeats his ſong.

The great diverſification of language implies the ſame latitude of invention and choice, in this, as in other arts practiſed by man. But how ſhall we conceive this invention to have been made, communicated, and adopted by all mankind? Whether, like that of other ingenious arts, may it be traced to the caſual or ſpecial exertion of one or a few ingenious men? This we

are told by tradition, was the origin of letters or written characters. But the poets alone venture to tell us that ſpeech was taught in the ſame manner, by ſome founder of rationality and civilization.

This is a work which every ſeparate nation or tribe appears to have performed for itſelf. And what, in one form or other, is univerſal to mankind, cannot have been the invention of one or a few: We cannot ſuppoſe one nation, or race of men, to have learned from another that in which all the ſeparate races of men differ from one another; nor can we ſuppoſe what is indefinitely varied, in the practice of every ſeparate horde, to have been the copy of any ſingle invention.

If we are aſked, therefore, who was the inventor of articulate ſounds? and, without being led by any degree of connection between the ſign and the thing ſignified, taught mankind a name for every known ſubject, a name for every quality, for every relation of things, for every thought or ſentiment of the mind, a form for every propoſition, whether interrogatory, affirmative, or negative, whether doubtful or certain, general or particular? who taught the tongue to vary the inflections of ſound, to keep pace with the variations of meaning? We may venture to anſwer, that Mind, or the principle of life in man, is competent to this effect; as fire, wherever it be lodged in any corporeal maſs, is competent to expanſion, fuſion, or evaporation. In natures ſtationary, like thoſe of moſt animal ſpecies, an original ſtock of inſtinctive expreſſion may be ſufficient for every purpoſe of life: But, in the progreſſive nature of man, it is neceſſary that the ſtock of language ſhould wax with the growing occaſions on which it is employed. And, although no ſingle genius, however vaſt, is equal to the invention of a language, ſuch as even the vulgar ſpeak, we may yet conceive that a talent for

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the uſe of arbitrary ſigns, ſuch as the ordinary race of men poſſeſs, operating in the detail of occaſions, ſtruggling to expreſs a meaning in ſuch ſignals as occurred, or were neareſt at hand, has enabled the parties mutually to underſtand, and be underſtood, ſo as to give to the vernacular dialect of every ſociety, in the reſult of their efforts, its degree of enlargement, and uſe.

When this end is obtained, in the degree which is common in many different ſocieties and ages, the ſpeculative mind is apt to look back with amazement from the height it has gained; as a traveller might do, who, riſing inſenſibly on the ſlope of a hill, ſhould come to look from a precipice of an almoſt unfathomable depth, to the ſummit of which he could ſcarcely believe himſelf to have aſcended without ſupernatural aid.

Parts of ſpeech, which, in ſpeculation, coſt the grammarian ſo much ſtudy, are in practice familiar to the vulgar: The rudeſt tribes, even the idiot, and the inſane, are poſſeſſed of them: They are ſooneſt learned in childhood; inſomuch, that we muſt ſuppoſe human nature, in its loweſt ſtate, competent to the uſe of them; and, without the intervention of uncommon genius, mankind, in a ſucceſſion of ages, qualified to accompliſh in detail this amazing fabric of language, which, when raiſed to its height, appears ſo much above what could be aſcribed to any ſimultaneous effort of the moſt ſublime and comprehenſive abilities.

We are apt to treat the origin of language, as we treat that of ſociety itſelf, by ſuppoſing a time when neither exiſted; but, from the facts now ſtated, we may venture to infer, that, ſince mankind were fairly entered on this ſcene of human life, there never was any ſuch time; that both aſſociating and ſpeaking, in however rude a form, are coeval with the ſpecies of man.

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There muſt have been ſociety at the birth of a man, and ſome ſpecies of expreſſion where any concourſe of numbers took place; and mankind, from the firſt, had a ſtock at leaſt of inſtinctive expreſſion, on which they wrought, endeavouring to ſupply its defects by the addition of ſome farther ſign, whether geſture or word.

If we would know, therefore, by what proceſs mankind have advanced in accumulating the parts of ſpeech, we have perhaps only to obſerve what they are now actually performing: For, in the moſt accompliſhed ſtate of any art, the higheſt attainment is no more than a continuation of the firſt attempts. Commerce, in the earlieſt period of its exiſtence, conſiſted in the exchange of a commodity that could be ſpared for one that was wanted: When moſt extended by the uſe of tallies, money, bank paper, and bills of exchange, it is ſtill the barter of what can be ſpared for what is required in return.

Language, in its rudeſt ſtate, furniſhed ſome means of expreſſion, inſtinctive or caſual: In its moſt accompliſhed ſtate, the ſtock of expreſſion is greatly enlarged; but men do not acquieſce in the laſt ſtate of their language any more than they do in the firſt: They change their words, to accommodate the circumſtances in which they have occaſion to uſe them. They find new forms of expreſſion for every new ſubject, and, rather than not effect any change, give way to the ſlighteſt movements of caprice or fancy.

Ut ſilvæ foliis pronos mutantur in annos,
Prima cadunt; ita verborum vetus interit ætas,
Et juvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.

Thus

Thus, men at work on the preſent ſtock of their language, whether large or narrow, ever contrive to adopt ſome new form of expreſſion; if it be wanted, the language is thereby improved; if unneceſſary, it is actually corrupted: but, on either ſuppoſition, it ſhews the capacity of man to effect, by degrees that gradual accumulation of ſigns, on which the progreſs of language conſiſts. The beautiful analogy of expreſſion, on which the rules of grammar are eſtabliſhed, is agreeable to the genius of man. Children are frequently miſled by it, and miſtake the practice of their tongue, by following analogy where that practice actually deviates from it. Thus, a little boy, being aſked how he came by his play thing, ſaid his *father buyed it for him.*

Living languages, if they do not improve, are diſpoſed to decline, and are not ſecured from change, even by the written monuments, which preſerve to ſucceeding ages the records or productions of thoſe who preceded them.

The ſacred text of religious inſtruction; favourite and popular compoſitions of genius, like thoſe of Homer in Greece, and Shakeſpear in England, have a tendency to arreſt the fleeting nature of language, but do not, as was formerly experienced in ſome of theſe inſtances, and is now felt in the others, ſecure it from change.

The uſe of writing, which extends the communications of men to any diſtance of place or time, though not univerſal, like ſpeech, has been frequent, and even common.

Words appear to have had as many original ſtocks, as there were ſeparate hordes or ſocieties of men: But, the invention of writing was original perhaps only to a few; or, in other terms,

terms, it appears that men have rather copied their written characters from the model of a few original inventions.

In all the nations of Europe, whether antient or modern, there is ſome analogy in the form of letters; ſtill more in the order of the alphabet, in the ſound of vowels, and in the power of conſonants: But, when we look abroad into the world at large *, there is reaſon to believe, that, although writing has been more rarely invented than ſpeech, yet here too the invention has been ſeparately made, and often repeated.

In this, as in the language of ſpeech, we find continued effects of man's wonderful talent for the uſe and interpretation of ſigns. In one nation, the written character is the ſign of a word; inſomuch that the linguiſt, in learning to write the words which he learned in his infancy to ſpeak, finds that his labour is more than doubled.

In other inſtances, and indeed with mankind in general, the written character is not the ſign of a ſubject, or of its name, but the mark of a ſimple ſound, or of ſome modification, ſuch as we term vowels and conſonants, in the conſtruction of an alphabet. As theſe may be reduced to a few, they are eaſily learnt; and, as their combinations may be varied indefinitely, they are ſufficient to ſpell any number of words that compoſe a language. The firſt mode of writing, by uſing a ſeparate ſign for every ſeparate word, is the more obvious invention: The ſecond, conſiſting in the formation of an alphabet, though ſetting out at a point more remote from its end, is in fact more eaſily learned, and more effectual to its purpoſe.

Man's

* See Marſden's Hiſtory of Sumatra.

Man's talent for communication and intercourſe is, no doubt, to be conſidered among the moſt irrefragable proofs of his deſtination to live in ſociety, and even to render this ſociety in ſome reſpects univerſal. The multiplicity of languages, indeed, tend to form a boundary between ſeparate ſocieties or hordes, and to retard the progreſs of unprofitable coalition or enlargement of empire. Theſe boundaries, however, as we have obſerved, do not prevent the moſt extenſive intercourſe of nations. Diſcoveries of ſcience, models of invention, or attainments of genius, whereever they may have originated, find their way to the world, and become a property of mankind. The ſame individual is able to maſter the ſeparate dialects of many different nations, and retain the knowledge of what has ceaſed to be ſpoken for many ages paſt: So that difference of language is but a feeble bar to the inquiſitive genius of man.

In this ſpecies, the communication extends from nation to nation, and from age to age, at any indefinite diſtance of place or time; and the ſociety, or co-operations of men may be conceived as extended accordingly. The preſent age is perfecting what a former age began; or is now beginning what a future age is to perfect. So that, in eſtimating the ſocial diſpoſition, and co-operating powers of mankind, we can no longer abide by the mere line of analogy, in which we have ſo far purſued their deſcription, and that of the other animals together. The ſubject is, in the ſequel, likely to furniſh more topics of contraſt of man to the animals, than of correſpondence or ſimilitude.

SECTION

SECTION V.

Of Man's Diſtinction among the Animals.

Quid enim intereſt, motu animi ſublato, non dico inter hominem et pecudem; ſed inter hominem et ſaxum, aut truncum, aut quidvis generis ejuſdem.
CICERO DE AMICIT. c. 3.

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MAN, whether conſidered in reſpect to the range of his active nature, or the reſult of his diſpoſition to ſociety, notwithſtanding the ſuperior powers of communication and intercourſe we have mentioned, appears to be no more than a variety in the ſyſtem of life. With the other parts of this ſyſtem, he partakes in all the principles of vegetable and animal natures, diſcoverable in him as well as in them, only, by external phenomena or apparent effects.

But there is a principle, in reſpect to which man differs from the other animals, not only in meaſure or degree, but totally, and in kind. This principle we term his intelligence or mind, intimately conſcious of itſelf, as it exiſts in thought, diſcernment, and will.

With reſpect to this principle, the obſerver may chuſe whether he will collect the external appearances that reſult from it, or the operations themſelves, in which its mode of exiſtence conſiſts.

Facts, that relate to the firſt, conſtitute a hiſtory of the Species, as it may be obſerved by any indifferent ſpectator: Facts, that relate to the ſecond, conſtitute a hiſtory of Mind, as it may be known to itſelf in the caſe of any individual. Both are eſſential to the knowledge of human nature, and to the ſtatement of its diſtinction in the ſyſtem of life.

The animals, for ought we know, might be ſuppoſed to partake in the intelligence of man, if the external effect did not ſerve to evince his diſtinction. The human ſpecies itſelf might be ſuppoſed alike in every age and nation, if we were not admoniſhed, in the variety of their external purſuits and attainments, of the inequalities of which they are ſuſceptible, and of the progreſs in which they are engaged.

To know human nature, therefore, we muſt avail ourſelves not only of the conſciouſneſs or reflection of a ſingle mind, but, more at large alſo, of the varieties that are preſented in the hiſtory of mankind.

Man is in part diſtinguiſhed among the animals, as they are from one another, by the make of his body, as well as by the courſe of his life.

While the quadruped has the trunk of his body parallel with the ground, and bearing on four ſupports, man carries from afar the aſpect of a column erected on a narrow baſe. Whatever

be the poſture to which he has recourſe for repoſe, he is ever ready, for the purpoſe of motion, obſervation, expreſſion, or action of any ſort, to raiſe himſelf on end; and is furniſhed with articulations and muſcles to aſſume this poſture, and to retain it with eaſe and ſafety.

He alone, of all the animals, exhibits the diſtinction of hand and foot: The firſt an inſtrument of art, a weapon of defence, and an organ of expreſſion; the other fitly ſhaped for a baſe on which he may ſtand, or with which he may practiſe the ſtep that protrudes him along in his walk. Other animals are either four-footed or four-handed, according as they are deſtined to tread upon the ground, or, ſubſiſting in woods, to climb aloft on the branches of trees, from which they are to gather their food.

Next to the general aſpect and carriage of the perſon, the form and capacity of the head and countenance give its moſt conſpicuous diſtinction to the human figure. A dome, comparatively larger and more capacious than the ſkull of any other animal, is raiſed over the features of the countenance, in which are collected many organs of perception or expreſſion, that connect immediately with the feelings and operations of mind.

Inſtead of the muzzle, or ſnout, projecting forward into a ſpecies of forceps or pincers, which diſtinguiſh the brute, the correſponding parts, in the human figure, are retired among the features of the countenance; become an organ of ſpeech; or, next to the eye itſelf, have the moſt powerful effect in the ſilent expreſſion which often reſults from the general ſtate of the features.

This difference of aſpect is ſtill clearly retained in all the varieties of the human race. Theſe, however different from one another,

ther, in ſtature, complexion, or features, are ſtill, in their perſons, diſtinguiſhable from the other animals, which, in the ſlow gradations of nature, ſeem to approach them the moſt.

To this peculiarity of aſpect and form, on the part of man, is joined a decided ſuperiority of condition and power. Compared to the other animals, he is every where the Lord among his vaſſals, and the maſter among his ſlaves; or, where any ſpecies remains untamed, and diſpoſed to diſpute his aſcendant, the conteſt in fact is unequal, or the balance, by ſome evident advantage of ſuperior reſource and contrivance, ever inclines to his ſide.

In this man is not favoured by any original advantage of ſtature, ſtrength, weapon, or larger proviſion for the ſupply of his animal wants. On the contrary, in all theſe reſpects, he labours under great meaſures of apparent comparative defect.

The animals, in general, are either of a conſtitution fit to partake, without inconvenience, in the temperature of the medium or element in which they are placed; or, they are furniſhed with a covering of plumage or fur, to reſiſt the ſudden or the extreme viciſſitudes of heat and cold. As they have their peculiar taſks to perform, their food to provide, their prey to ſubdue, or enemies to encounter, they are furniſhed with fit inſtruments for labour, with limbs for the chaſe, or weapons for the battle. They have their ſpecific inſtincts, to direct them in the choice of materials for food, and of retreats for ſhelter; and are provided for ſafety, whether by reſiſtance or flight.

In this diſtribution of favours, it is remarkable that man alone, of all the larger animals, is naked, unarmed, and unprovided againſt the peculiar inconveniences of any ſituation or climate.

In compariſon with many other animals, he is too weak for reſiſtance, and too ſlow for flight; even on the earth, which he inhabits, he is perhaps no where poſſeſſed of a ſoil, which ſpontaneouſly yields a ſufficient produce of herbage or fruit for his maintenance; and he himſelf, in the firſt attempts to provide a ſupply, is liable to miſtake the ſpecies that is fit for his nouriſhment.

Such are the apparent comparative defects in the original lot and deſcription of man: But nature has not left this ſuperior part of her works without compenſation. If ſhe has given to the other animals plumage, furs, and weapons; if ſhe has inſpired them with inſtincts conducive to their ſafety; if ſhe has ſpread forth the board on which they are to feed, and, in the midſt of plenty, taught every ſpecies to ſelect what is proper for itſelf; ſhe has proportionally reſtrained their freedom, and ſtinted their talents for obſervation, invention, or progreſſion, in the execution of their works.

To man, the faculties of obſervation or choice are given, as an ample equivalent for every other advantage; and every actual ſupply is withheld from him, not through a penury in the œconomy of nature, or a defect of reſource, but as a privation proper to the lot of a being, who is fitted to accommodate himſelf; deſtined to be the artificer of his own fortune, to cultivate his own faculties; and, though of a claſs ſuperior to any of the other animals, deſtined to receive the firſt leſſons of intelligence itſelf, in providing a ſupply for the comparative wants and defects of his animal nature.

Every other animal, from the firſt outſet of the ſpecies and the individual, is equal to his taſk; proceeds, in the ſhorteſt way, to the

the attainment of his purpoſe; and neither miſtakes the end, nor the means by which it is to be obtained.

In what he performs, we often juſtly admire the ingenuity of contrivance, and the completeneſs of the work: But, it is the ingenuity of the ſpecies, not of the individual; or rather, it is the wiſdom of God, not the deliberate effect of invention or choice, which the created being is fitted to employ for himſelf. His taſk is preſcribed, and his manner of performing it ſecured.

If we ſhould compare individuals together, in order to meaſure their inequalities of capacity or genius; if we ſhould compare what the beginning practitioner or novice performs, with that which is done by the aged or experienced, in order to remark the progreſs of ſkill and addreſs; if we ſhould compare the productions of one age or generation with thoſe of a former, after many years of experience are paſt; we ſhould find, in every ſpecies of animal, a nature perfectly fixed and ſtationary, the ſame in the laſt, as in the firſt efforts of its living exertions.

Obſerve the animals moſt remarkable for a happy choice of materials, and for the curious execution of their works: The bird, how unvaried in the choice of the matter he employs in the ſtructure, or in the ſituation he has choſen for, his airy or neſt! Inſects, moſt exquiſitely artful in the execution of their little works, for the accommodation of their ſwarms, and the lodgement of their ſtores; how accompliſhed in their firſt and leaſt experienced attempts; how uniform and unchanged in the laſt!

Nature appears to have given to the other animals a ſpecific direction to the means they are to employ, without any rational conception of the end for which they are to employ them. Of this,

this, the reverſe may be affirmed of man. To him, it ſhould ſeem that the ends of nature are diſcloſed, in general principles of choice or rejection, which direct him to the preſervation and advancement of his own nature; but that the choice of means is left, in a great meaſure, to his own obſervation and judgement. Having no other guide but his own experience, he is at firſt unſkilful and awkward; he even continues to miſtake and to err, until he has received his correction from a ſenſe of the wrong he has committed, or the evil he has incurred.

To the mere animal, the Author of nature appears to have ſaid, "Such I have made you, and ſuch you ſhall be, and no "more:" To man, "I have given you intelligence and freedom; "I have not ſet bounds to what you may attain, in the proper "uſe of your faculties; and, as the good you attain ſhall be your "own, ſo, for the talent you miſplace, you muſt be account-"able."

Such is the ſum of that diſtinction, which ſubſiſts betwixt man and the other animals; a diſtinction which it is of great conſequence to retain in our thoughts, at every ſtep of the argument relating to him.

An author of much ingenuity and ſatirical wit, in framing the deſcription of an imaginary ſpecies of brute, ſuppoſed in the human ſhape, has ſet forth how much man, conſidered as a mere animal, would be inferior to many others of the kind *.

The picture, without queſtion, is ſhocking; but ſuch as we muſt admit to be fairly drawn, on the ſuppoſition of brutal appetite,

* Dean Swift's Travels of Gulliver.

petite, and a perpetual competition for the means of gratifying it, unreſtrained by any better affection, or ſuggeſtion of candour or wiſdom.

The human body, in its faireſt and moſt accompliſhed form, becomes ghaſtly and hideous, when the energy of life is withdrawn; and the living aſpect itſelf would be odious, were the happy expreſſions of benevolence and candour changed into indications of brutality and malice. We may therefore be ready to admit, that even the *Yahoo* is not an overcharged deſcription of an ungoverned brute in the ſhape of man.

A human creature, leſs furniſhed than any other animal with determinate inſtincts, without the guidance of reaſon to ſupply their place, without ſelection in the object, or bounds in the gratification of his appetite, without candour or remorſe in the conduct of his competitions or reſentments, would be a monſter too odious for nature to endure. So that writers who ſuppoſe man originally bereft of intelligence, and yet place him on a level with the brutes, have, in reality, given to this creature of their own imagination a rank, in the ſcale of being, higher than that to which he would be entitled *.

Intelligence, indeed, in its outſet, conſiſting in mere capacity, but without the attainments it is fitted to make, would ill ſupply the defect of inſtinct: And man, in the ſuppoſed naſcent ſtate of his faculties, without knowledge, which is the reſult of obſervation and ſtudy; without addreſs or dexterity, which is the reſult of practice and habit; without ſtrength of mind or of body, which is the reſult of exerciſe, as well as original power; might appear on a level below that of the animal kingdom.

But,

* Rouſſeau Origin de l'Inegalité, &c.

PART. I. CHAP. I. SECT. V.

But, though ſo much inferior, in his earlieſt efforts, yet when he has moved for a little in the tract to which he is deſtined, and has made trial of his faculties, he ſoon leaves every animal behind in the variety and extent of his operations, and in the meaſure of the ſupply or fitneſs of the accommodation which he procures for himſelf. He is indeed able to ſubſiſt, or to drag a precarious life, even in his rudeſt ſtate: But he is ſo far from being ſtationary, in this or any other condition, that, after many ages of progreſs, he muſt either continue to advance, or is expoſed to decline: And, though relieved of much inconvenience, even after he has attained to what at a diſtance appeared to be the ſummit of his fortune, he is in reality only come to a point, at which new objects are preſented to entice his purſuits, and towards which he is urged with the ſpurs of ambition, while thoſe of neceſſity are no longer applied. Or, if the deſire of any thing better than the preſent ſhould at any time ceaſe to operate in his mind, he becomes liſtleſs and negligent, loſes the advantages he had gained, whether of poſſeſſion or ſkill, and declines in his fortune, till a ſenſe of his own defects and his ſufferings reſtore his induſtry.

As the other animals are leſs able to vary their modes of living, they are limited proportionally to the climates and ſituations in which they are qualified to ſubſiſt. The chamois, or mountain roe does not deſcend into the plain; amphibious animals do not depart from the ſhore; nor the falcon and eagle ceaſe to haunt the higheſt part of the cliff: Such as are indigenous to the torrid or the frigid zone, do not willingly ſtray into the temperate climates on either ſide. Man alone appears to be indigenous in every ſituation and climate, enjoying an extent of range ſuited to his freedom of choice, and his ability to lodge and accommodate himſelf.

As

As the objects preſented to man, in different parts of the earth; as the inconveniences he has occaſion to remove; the advantages he has occaſion to gain, with the expedients he has occaſion to practiſe, are various, or never preciſely the ſame, in any two ſituations; he muſt ever vary his purſuits, and accommodate his manner of life to the exigency of his caſe. In maritime ſituations, accordingly, he is a mariner and a fiſherman; within land, he is a hunter, a herdſman, or a labourer of the ground.

In all theſe profeſſions, he has an immediate view to the ſupply or accommodation of animal life: But, among the arts which he practiſes, or the forms he affects, there are ſome of which a ſpectator, unacquainted with what paſſes in the mind of man, never could comprehend the purpoſe or the uſe. In the ſtructure of his dwelling, in the faſhion of his cloaths, in the ſervice of his table, the neceſſary or uſeful alone does not content him; he affects no leſs than the gratifications of fancy, in decoration and ornament. He works for the eye, the imagination, and the underſtanding, no leſs than for the ſupply of his animal wants; and his ſtores are repleniſhed with productions executed in a combination of forms, or ſigns of expreſſion; from which he alone, of all the animal kingdom, can receive any gratification or benefit.

Among the fabrics of great labour and coſt, there are ſome on which he is willing to expend his utmoſt reſources, but which are neither habitations in which he may dwell, nor fortreſſes in which he may conſult his ſafety; but edifices dedicated to inviſible beings, of which he alone, of all the animals, perceives the exiſtence in any phenomena of nature, whether ordinary or uncommon.

In purſuance of the affection or paſſion, whether of admiration or fear, that relates to this object, he is laviſh of his ſubſtance, and ſcrupulous in the obſervance of forms, which are, in their own nature ſo various, and, upon any principle of mere animal life, ſo unaccountable, that, to men who obſerve one another, their different practices appear altogether irrational, and often profane.*

As nature ſeems to try the ingenuity of man, in a variety of problems, and to provide that the ſpecies, in different countries, ſhall not find any two ſituations preciſely alike; ſo the generations that ſucceed one another, in the ſame country, are, in the reſult of their own operations, or the operations of thoſe that went before them, ever made to enter upon ſcenes continually varied. The inventions of one age prepare a new ſituation for the age that ſucceeds; and, as the ſcene is ever changing, the actors proceed to change their purſuits and their manners, and to adapt their inventions to the circumſtances in which they are placed.

Men of one generation naked in the woods, and ſubſiſting on herbage and fruits, appear weak or defenceleſs, and only fit to become a prey to ſome other animals more fierce than themſelves: But, in a few generations, many of theſe defects are ſupplied; and thoſe we term ſavages, clothed in the ſkin of the beaſts they have ſlain, and armed with the club or the bow, become themſelves animals of prey; or, by their arts and inventions, dangerous to thoſe that originally ſurpaſſed them in fierceneſs or ſtrength. Learning to diſtruſt the precarious ſupply of the chace, they become, in the ſequel, keepers of herds, which they tend with anxious care to their paſture; and they may be traced on

* Profana illic omnia quæ apud nos ſacra.

on the earth by the trampling of hoofs, and the conſumption of herbage, which they are not at any pains to reſtore.

In the progreſs of this verſatile being to improve his condition, the fur is exchanged for a web of his own manufacture; his utenſils and his furniture multiply; become too unwieldy for carriage, and too precious to be left behind. The tent is exchanged for a cottage; the labourer acquires an intereſt in the field he has cultivated, or is made to feel the concerns of the huſbandman or the citizen; and relies on the produce of his land, and on his ſkill to fabricate rude materials, for the means of his ſubſiſtence or accommodation.

Anxious to reproduce what his neceſſities have made him to conſume; anxious to ſecure, in the form of property, what he has procured by his labour; ſtudious of ornament, as well as uſe, in the work he performs, whether in the culture of his fields, in the form of his habitation, or in the equipage of his perſon; his habits keep pace with his manner of life: and, neither in his condition, nor in the deſcription of his perſon, any marks remain of that rude or defenceleſs ſtate, in which the ſpecies may have ſet out on its progreſs.

From all theſe varieties, whether of art, or of the purpoſe for which arts are practiſed, without explicitely ſtating to ourſelves the difference of effect to be apprehended from change of opinion, or freedom of choice, on the one hand, or of determinate inſtinct on the other, we reaſon differently of man and the other animals: We expect variety in the ſeparate nations of men, and uniformity in animals of the ſame ſpecies: We ſeem to think it impoſſible that the manners of men, in any two ſituations, ſhould be alike; or, that animals of the ſame ſpecies ſhould any where

differ. The grouſe in America, we are told, perch upon trees; the hare burrows in the ground; and we have, in theſe inſtances, ſufficient reaſon to deny that the ſpecies of either is the ſame with thoſe of a like denomination, with which we are acquainted, in Europe. But if an American tribe ſhould, in their manners, practice of life, or religious ceremonies, have reſemblance to a nation of the antient world, we infer ſome previous communication, or even think ourſelves warranted to conclude, that the one muſt have been peopled from the other*; and are as much puzzled to account for uniformity in the different ages and nations of men, as we ſhould be to account for variety in ſpecimens of the ſame animal.

Such, then, are a few of the external appearances, in which the human ſpecies is diſtinguiſhed from other parts of the animal kingdom: If we would purſue theſe appearances to the difference of nature from which they proceed, it will be neceſſary to attend to the mind itſelf, from whoſe capacity of wiſdom or folly, theſe diverſities of purſuit and attainment, or of error and miſtake, will be found to ariſe.

From the mere difference of reſult, on the part of man, compared with the other animals, an important diſtinction of nature may be aſſumed. This we commonly expreſs in the terms, Reaſon and Inſtinct. But the line of ſeparation here pointed out is far from being clearly marked in every inſtance.

If, by Inſtinct, we mean a propenſity or diſpoſition inſpired by the Author of nature, of ſuch there are many alſo in the frame or conſtitution of man: Even Reaſon itſelf is a faculty, which we derive in this manner from the Author of our being.

Upon

* Vide La Fitau Meurs des Sauvages.

Upon this ground, therefore, the diſtinction is ſometimes rejected, and the term inſtinct promiſcuouſly applied to the original propenſities of men and of animals.

That man is endowed with inſtincts of the ſame nature with thoſe of the brutes, we ſhall have occaſion to obſerve, and to ſpecify examples of ſuch original directions received from the inſpiration of our Maker; but that, in many inſtances of original propenſity in us, the conſtitution of our nature is eſſentially different.

The brutes are directed by their inſtincts to the uſe of means, prior to any knowledge of the end. Man is directed by his propenſity to an end, whether of preſervation or advancement, and qualified to obſerve, and to chooſe for himſelf the means of obtaining that end. Hence the uniformity of works performed by individuals of the ſame ſpecies of animal, and continued from the firſt to the laſt generation in each: And hence the indefinite variety of materials, and manner of execution employed by men in purſuit of the ſame objects.

Of this diſtinction, and the eſſential properties of nature implyed in it, we ſhall have frequent occaſion to treat, in the farther proſecution of our inquiries.

CHAP. II.

OF MIND, OR THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INTELLIGENCE.

SECTION I.

Introduction.

TO limit our obſervations of human nature to the mere external effects of intelligence, were to contemplate a figure only in the ſhadow it caſts, while we have the ſubſtance itſelf in poſſeſſion, and under our view. However ungracious, therefore, the office may be, to thoſe who are accuſtomed to look only abroad for ſubjects of thought, it is neceſſary that we turn the ſenſe inward, upon the mind itſelf, in order to lay open the foundations of power and choice, in which we are ſo deeply concerned.

PART I. CHAP. II. SECT. I.

Mind is conſcious of itſelf, and on this ground may proceed to recollect and ſtudy its own nature. The objects of conſciouſneſs and reflection are like thoſe of perception and obſervation upon any other ſubject, matters of fact, and articles of natural hiſtory.

In the hiſtory of mind, no leſs than in that of any other natural ſubject, we have a multiplicity and ſucceſſion of particular operations, which may be diſtinguiſhed with reſpect to their differences, and claſſed in reſpect to their agreements and reſemblance. By ſuch arrangements, they are placed in a comprehenhenſible order, and under generic or ſpecific names, are familiarly treated, as matter of recollection or argument.

By the laws of apprehenſion, to which we are ſubjected, every operation is referred to a faculty, of which it is ſuppoſed the exertion; and every faculty is referred to a ſubſtance, of which it is conceived to be a quality.

So nature has determined, with reſpect to our apprehenſion of things.

Operations of mind are, in ſome inſtances, ſo like one another, that we not only refer them to the ſame faculty, but conſider them as repetitions of the ſame operation. They are, in other inſtances, ſo different, that we think it neceſſary to admit in the performance of them, faculties totally diſtinct.

In the ſame manner, alſo, we reaſon of qualities, and apprehend ſubſtances to be the ſame or different, according to the affinity and diſcrepancy of the qualities by which they are known.

Body is known by its ſolidity, or impenetrability, by its inertia or reſiſtance to change of ſtate, and, we may add, by its weight alſo. Mind is known by its conſciouſneſs, by its conception of objects, and by its will.

It is natural to diſtinguiſh between the ſubſtances, of which the qualities are ſo much unlike; and, if this diſtinction be well-founded, it muſt appear nugatory, afterwards, in the way of explanation or theory, to reſolve operations of mind into qualities of matter, whether figure or motion.

That we may reaſon of ſubſtance, without taking any particular qualities into our account, is evident from the familiar uſe of the abſtract term ſubſtance, itſelf; but, we are ſo far from conceiving ſubſtance abſolutely diveſted of every quality, that the mention of it brings the ſenſe of an impoſſibility, which we accordingly never attempt to realize in our thoughts.

As we cannot conceive or imagine ſubſtances exiſting without ſome quality, ſo we are apt to attach to every ſubſtance the qualities with which we are moſt familiar. Thus, extenſion, juxtapoſition of parts, and ſolid dimenſion, the qualities moſt commonly perceived by our ſenſes, recur in our conceptions of every exiſtent nature: Inſomuch, that ſubjects known to us, by qualities entirely different from theſe, are, nevertheleſs ſuppoſed to be inveſted with theſe qualities alſo, as eſſential to their being.

It is thus, that, while mind is known only by its qualities of thought and ſentiment, we think neceſſary to aſcribe to it alſo dimenſion and place. But, if in mind, over and above its own

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qualities of apprehenſion and will, are to be conceived thoſe of body alſo, we do not know its corporeal qualities ſo well, as to give them a place in its deſcription or hiſtory. The microſcope has not yet made us acquainted with the ſtructure of its parts. Thoughts multiply, and knowledge extends, without any increaſe of bulk or change of place or figure.

At the ſame time, we may be ſatisfied, that, although ſome ſort of materialiſm intrude on our conceptions, it is not neceſſary that mind ſhould have the qualities of body, in order to exiſt. The well known ſubſtances of light, heat, and all the powers that operate in the attraction of bodies, whether gravitation, magnetiſm, or electricity, exiſt without dimenſion, ſolidity, or impenetrability. They penetrate ſpace however occupied by the moſt ſolid bodies. They are themſelves alſo freely penetrated, make no reſiſtance, and give no addition of weight. So light, in particular, though in motion with the moſt amazing velocity, does not impel any body in its way: In reſpect to tranſparent bodies, it penetrates the ſolid, as it does empty ſpace. Heat, as it penetrates, without diſtinction, the hardeſt and moſt impervious of bodies, is compriſed in their ſubſtance, without making any addition to their weight. Gravitation, magnetiſm, and electricity, are not intercepted by the moſt ſolid partitions. To electricity, indeed, different bodies are unequally pervious. And, in the act of repulſion, we may conceive both electricity and magnetiſm, like a fluid ſtream to impel the bodies which are placed in their way: But this will not explain their attractive power; and is altogether inconſiſtent with what is obſerved of gravitation, in particular; which, though at a great diſtance from the point to which it is directed, operates on bodies in motion, the ſame as on bodies at reſt, and continues to give equal increments of motion, when

when the velocity is greateſt, as it did when the body firſt began to move.

It is by no means intended to ſtate the ſubſtance of light, heat, or accelerating, and retarding power, as of the ſame nature with mind. They may indeed be the operations of mind, although we know not of any mental quality they exhibit, farther than that the apparent deſign is regular and beneficent. But, conſidering their well known exiſtence, diſtinguiſhed as they are from inert and impenetrable matter, we muſt be cautious in ſuppoſing that ſubſtance and body are equivalent terms; or that, wherever there is motion of a body inert, there muſt be an impulſe of ſome other body to produce it.

The vulgar do not queſtion the reality of what they perceive by their ſenſes; and, in aſcribing reality to mind, conceive it in ſome form of vapour or floating duſt: But they ought ſurely to acknowledge the exiſtence of ſenſation itſelf, as more evident than that of matter which is felt, and which, at a kind of ſecond hand, is known only by means of ſenſations; and they ought to conſider mind itſelf as, of all beings known to them, the moſt certain and real. Its oppoſite conditions of happineſs or miſery are indeed the ends to which they refer, in eſtimating the value or conſequence of every thing elſe.

Mind is ſufficiently known by its capacity of knowledge, of enjoyment, or ſuffering; and, it will not affect our proceeding in any future inquiry concerning it, whether we conſider theſe as exiſting in a ſubſtance peculiar to themſelves, or as the appurtenances of extended matter, ſuppoſed thin, ſubtile, or voluble, for the purpoſe.

If a certain variety, in the operations of mind, make it neceſſary to ſuppoſe a plurality of operating powers or faculties; or, if we are well founded in aſſuming the diſtinction of faculties; it were abſurd, no doubt, afterwards, in the way of theory, to attempt reſolving the operations of one faculty into thoſe of another: If ſenſations and judgements, ſelf-love and ſocial affection, are diſtinguiſhed, it were abſurd, afterwards to account for judgement, by ſuppoſing it ſenſation, or to account for benevolence, by ſuppoſing it to be mere ſelf love.

The mind being deſtined to know and to act, the moſt general arrangement of its powers is that of underſtanding and will, or, in the words of Mr Hobbes, "The powers *cognitive* and the powers *active*."

Under the firſt, are included all the operations which terminate in apprehenſion or knowledge.

Under the other, all the principles of choice or rejection, which terminate in will.

Under the firſt of theſe titles, then, we may conſider the ſources of knowledge, and meaſures of evidence with the canons of reaſon, in giving or witholding belief.

To this we may join the hiſtory of our conceptions, whether particular or general, practical or theoretic, with the functions of memory, imagination, abſtraction, penetration, ſagacity, ſcience, and foreſight.

Under

Under the title of will we may conſider propenſities original or acquired, the diſcernment of good and evil, with the ſovereign command of mind over itſelf, and its determination or choice.

SECTION

SECTION II.

Of Knowledge in general.

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AMONG the characteriſtics of mind, knowledge is one of the firſt and moſt important. Conſidered as information of the ends we are to purſue, and the means we are to employ in obtaining them, it is to man, where mere inſtinct is wanting, the ſole direction under which he is to act.

The animals, uninſtructed, unexperienced, and previous to any opportunities of obſervation, aim at their purpoſe with the moſt unerring direction, and obtain it by the moſt effectual means. Thus, the bee is no ſooner let looſe from the cell in which he is generated, than he joins the infant ſwarm, in its ſeparation from the parent ſtock: Bent on ſettling a new colony, this unexperienced multitude fix in ſome hollow trunk, or covered ſtation, fit for their reception; and, having a home, ſally from thence, in ſearch of materials for the conſtruction of cells, which they form and arrange together upon the moſt exquiſite model, repleniſh with honey, and, in the reſult, are lodged and ſupplied with ſtore of proviſion for a winter, of which they have not yet had any experience. They do not ſuffer for want of knowledge in their firſt attempts, nor do they profit by experience in a ſucceſſion of years: They neither ſtand in need of information at the outſet, nor avail themſelves of it in the ſequel; and we are

therefore warranted to conclude, that knowledge is not the principle or guide under which they are deſtined to act.

But man, although, in ſome inſtances, he may be found to act in the manner of a mere animal, yet, in moſt inſtances, he proceeds upon his knowledge of an end, and upon his choice of means for the attainment of it: He ſometimes acts upon the conception of an object that is abſent or future, in preference to one that is preſent to his ſenſes. To him, therefore, knowledge, or a juſt conception of things, is the firſt and moſt neceſſary qualification of his active, as well as intelligent nature.

Whoever has lived but a few years knows that time paſſes in the viciſſitudes of day and night, of ſummer and winter; but he cannot define knowledge, nor tell what it is to know, any more than he can tell what it is for the mind to exiſt.

Our conceptions of things are termed, in a language now become familiar and common, our *ideas* of them; and ideas are ſuppoſed to be images, types, or copies, reſembling certain originals; not mere notions or thoughts of ours forming the apprehenſion or knowledge of ſuch originals.

It is difficult for us to quit the analogy of matter, with which we become ſo familiar, in the firſt and continued uſe of our ſenſes: In every language, accordingly, the operations of mind have been expreſſed in corporeal image, or metaphor: Our notions or conceptions of things are termed impreſſions or images; and the analogy, upon which ſuch metaphors are founded is ſometimes miſtaken for identity, or ſameneſs, in the natures ſo confounded together in metaphorical language.

One

One ſect of the antient philoſophers choſe to forget the quality of mere rhetorical figure, under which ſuch expreſſions are uſed; and treated the notion, or mental apprehenſion, as an image or picture of the thing, in the moſt literal ſenſe.

Such were the images, or little models of things, which, according to Democritus, and Epicurus, were continually flying off from their ſubſtances; floating in ſpace; entering the organs of animals; and, by their aſſemblage in the brain, producing all the modifications of ſenſation, thought and volition.

Nunc agere incipiam tibi, quod vehementer ad has res
Attinet, eſſe ea quæ rerum ſimulacra vocamus,
Quæ quaſi membranæ ſummo de corpore rerum
Direptæ volitant ultro citroque per auras.

Luc. lib. 3. ver. 33.

And Cicero, in ſtating this Epicurean hypotheſis, has the following words: "Imagines quæ idola nominant quorum incur-
"ſione non ſolum videamus, ſed etiam cogitemus."

De finibus, lib. 1. c. 6.

According to this ſyſtem, the thoughts and conceptions, of which the mind is conſcious, are in reality a mere collection of little images, obtruded upon it from abroad.

A ſimilar language has been adopted in modern times, and repeated without ſufficient intimation whether it be meant in a figurative or literal ſenſe. Thus, Mr Hobbes, ſo prone to materialiſm, and to the uſe of corporeal images, has led the way, and been followed with little variation, though perhaps with more

reſpect to the diſtinction between mind and matter, by Des Cartes, Malebranche, Locke, and others.

Theſe authors differ ſomewhat in the methods they have purſued; but all agree, in reſting their theories on the ſubſtitution of images, or, as they term them, ideas, for the ſimple apprehenſion of things.

In this train Hobbes ſets out with the following aſſumption, which he ſeems to think ſo evident, as not to need any proof: "We muſt remember and acknowledge," he ſays, "that there be "in our minds continually certain images or conceptions of "things without us. Inſomuch that, if a man could be alive, "and all the reſt of the world annihilated, he ſhould, nevertheleſs retain the image thereof, and all thoſe which he had before "ſeen or perceived in it."

Upon this hypotheſis, the phenomena of memory and imagination, according to him, are fully explicable; "for, as the motion "of the water," he ſays, "continues after the ſtone ſtruck in it, or "the wind by which it is agitated, has ceaſed; ſo theſe images "continue in the mind, after the external cauſe is removed, and "are termed Memory."

So far there appears to be little difference between the images of Hobbes and the *idolæ* or *ſimulacra* of Democritus and Epicurus. Others have exchanged the term image for that of idea, a term borrowed from Plato, but in which he expreſſed not any particular perception or apprehenſion; but the ſtandard model or conception of genus or ſpecies, *(the one in many* *), after

* Εν ἐν Πολλοῖς.

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which individuals are formed: But, under the term Idea, as it is now employed, we are left to underſtand ſome type, image, or repreſentation, on the one hand, or mere notion and mental apprehenſion on the other, as beſt ſuits the purpoſe of argument on the ſubject.

In common language, our idea of a ſubject is the ſame as our notion or conception of it: But Mr Locke frequently ſeems to intend ſomething different from this, as, when he ſtates that we cannot have knowledge, where we have not ideas. This is undoubtedly true; but, if idea mean the ſame thing as notion, it were certainly nugatory to obſerve, that we cannot have knowledge of a ſubject, if we have not any notion of it.

The ſubſtitution of corporeal for mental attributes, with a view to explain the latter, is curiouſly exemplified in the following paſſage tranſlated from Malebranche: "We are accuſtomed," he ſays, "to diſtinguiſh in the mind two faculties, Underſtanding "and Will. Theſe we muſt explain in the outſet; for, it does not "appear that our notions or ideas of them are ſufficiently clear "and diſtinct: But, becauſe theſe ideas are abſtract, and do not "enter into the imagination, it ſeems proper to expreſs them un- "der ſome image of the properties that belong to matter, which "being eaſily imagined, will render the meaning of theſe terms, "Underſtanding and Will, more diſtinct, and even more fami- "liar." After ſome caution, not to think the mental and corporeal qualities the ſame, this author proceeds to obſerve, "that, "as bodies are ſuſceptible of figure and motion, ſo mind is ſuſ- "ceptible of ideas and diſpoſitions. The firſt," he ſays, "are its "figure; the other its motions," &c. &c.

Theſe

Theſe allegorical ſubſtitutions are not mentioned with a view to purſue their applications, or to take any benefit from the facility they are ſuppoſed to give in the ſtudy of the mind. It were, indeed, difficult to conceive what benefit they ſhould yield; if, on the pretence of explaining a ſubject, they only divert the attention away from it, or ſubſtitute ſome what elſe in its place.

Mr Hobbes, as well as Mr Locke, have expreſſed many juſt obſervations in their metaphorical language of images or ideas; particularly in what the one calls the coherence of thoughts, the other the aſſociation of ideas. But, to profit by theſe obſervations, we muſt remember that the fact is not any magical coherence, or aſſociation of thoughts, but a habit or diſpoſition of the mind in us, to conceive together things which have been preſented together.

The author of an Enquiry into the Mind, * and of ſubſequent Eſſays on the intellectual and active powers of man, has great merit in the effect to which he has purſued this hiſtory: But, conſidering the point at which the ſcience ſtood, when he began his inquiries, he has perhaps no leſs merit in having removed the miſt of hypotheſis and metaphor, with which the ſubject was enveloped; and, in having taught us to ſtate the facts, of which we are conſcious, not in figurative language, but in the terms which are proper to the ſubject. In this it will be our advantage to follow him; the more, that in former theories ſo much attention had been paid to the introduction of ideas or images, as the elements of knowledge, that the belief of any external exiſtence or prototpye has been left to be inferred from the mere idea or image; and this inference indeed is ſo little founded, that many who have come to examine its evidence have thought themſelves warranted to deny

* Dr Reid.

it altogether *. And hence the ſcepticiſm of ingenious men, who not ſeeing a proper acceſs to knowledge, through the medium of ideas, without conſidering whether the road they had been directed to take was the true, or a falſe one, denied the poſſibility of arriving at the end.

The reality of knowledge, nevertheleſs, however little to be explained by any corporeal analogy, may be ſafely aſſumed, and the facts which relate to the attainment of it, be conſidered as an important part in the hiſtory of mind.

There was little progreſs of knowledge, ſo long as men of ingenuity ſuppoſed ſcience to conſiſt in explaining the primary facts of which nature has given us the uſe, but not the theory: Such, in the material ſyſtem of nature, are the laws of gravitation and motion. It was vain to think of explaining them; but, ſo ſoon as they were conſidered as fundamental in nature, to be conſidered, not in reſpect to their origin, but in reſpect to their applications and conſequences, ſcience has made a rapid progreſs in explaining the phenomena of that ſyſtem in which they prevail.

In the following method, it is propoſed to inveſtigate and to apply, not to explain, the laws of conception and will: To conſider them, as they are verified in the deſcription of human nature; in order to lay open to our recollection, as much as may be, the foundations of power and choice, and to delineate the ſuperſtructure that may be raiſed upon theſe foundations.

SECTION

* See the Writings of Dr Berkley and Mr Hume.

SECTION III.

Of the Actual Sources of Knowledge, and Meaſures of Evidence.

THE ſources of knowledge may be referred to four titles, viz. Conſciouſneſs, Perception, Teſtimony, and Inference.

The two firſt may be termed primary or immediate, becauſe from them we receive the firſt elements of our conception, and obtain information by immediate recourſe to the ſubject of knowledge.

In the third and fourth inſtances, knowledge may be termed derived or ſecondary, becauſe it is obtained by ſome medium interpoſed, or by means different from that of mere attention to the ſubject itſelf.

If the original ſources of information were ſhut up, the knowledge they are fitted to yield, could not be ſupplied in any other way: If a perſon, for inſtance, were not himſelf conſcious of a given paſſion or affection, whether fear or love, he could not have any conception of ſuch mental qualities; and, it is well known, that perſons having no perception of colour or ſound, remain through life without any ſuch conceptions; whereas, want of teſtimony,

from which to receive information, or want of data, from which to infer it, may be mutually ſupplied one by the other; if not by more immediate acquaintance with the ſubject, in perſonal obſervation or perception.

Conſciouſneſs is the firſt and moſt eſſential attribute of the mind. It is expreſſed in what the grammarians term the firſt perſonal pronoun *I*, or *Ego*, and is ſtated in every ſentence of which that pronoun is the ſubject. In multiplying ſuch ſentences, the conſcious mind ſeems to give an account of itſelf; and, in doing ſo, may either enumerate particulars, or proceed to generalize, inveſtigating the laws of its own nature, in a proceſs perfectly ſimilar to what is followed in treating any other ſubject of obſervation, of hiſtory, or ſcience.

Mind, conſidered in reſpect to its powers of communication or expreſſion is a ſubject of thoſe ſciences, which are termed grammar and rhetoric. Conſidered in reſpect to its faculties of perception, inquiry, and diſcernment of truth, it is the ſubject of logic: Conſidered in reſpect to the principles of choice, its diſcernment of good and evil, and its capacity of enjoyment and ſuffering, it is the ſubject of moral wiſdom: And, when articles of all theſe different kinds are collected merely as characteriſtics of its nature, it is the ſubject of pneumatology, or the deſcription and natural hiſtory of mind.

The knowledge obtained by reflection, from conſciouſneſs, is, of all others, the moſt intimate and ſure. It conſiſts in a conviction of reality that ſets every cavil and diſpute at defiance, or does not admit of a queſtion, whether that of which we are conſcious may not be otherwiſe than as we are conſcious of it: In other matters, even in matters of perception, there is an informa-

tion and a ſubject of information, that may be ſeparately ſtated; but, in this inſtance, the ſubject and information it brings, the thought or affection, and the conſciouſneſs of thought or affection, are inſeparable. Here the evidence of reality remains unſhaken and unattempted by the boldeſt aſſaults of ſcepticiſm. The very ſtatement of doubt is a dogmatic aſſumption of perſonal exiſtence and thought.

In metaphyſics, or mathematics, are ſtated ſome axioms, of which the truth is not only real but neceſſary; and in this they differ from the facts of which we are conſcious, which, however irrefragably eſtabliſhed by that evidence, are in the nature of things contingent, or might have been otherwiſe.

In the mean time, it may be queſtioned, whether many, if not all the axioms having the evidence of neceſſary truth, be not ſome ſpecies of diſguiſed tautology, in which a ſubject repeated in the form of a predicate is affirmed of itſelf. Thus the tautological axiom of whatever *is is*, may be diſguiſed in the following expreſſions: *It is impoſſible for the ſame thing to be and not to be. Of contradictory propoſitions, the one muſt be true, the other falſe.* Things equal *to the ſame thing* muſt be equal to *one another.* Take equal things from equal things, the *remainders will be equal.* To theſe we may join the axiom, That every effect muſt have a cauſe: For we affirm in the predicate no more than what we aſſume in the ſubject,—That an effect, which ever implies ſome one thing that is produced by another, is ſo produced. Change the term to exiſtence, and it is not equally neceſſary that every exiſtence ſhould have a cauſe prior to itſelf.

In perception, we have cognizance of objects diſtinct or apart from ourſelves, and learn that we are but a part in the ſyſtem of nature.

We

PART. I. CHAP. II. SECT. III.

We perceive in our frame certain animal organs of ſmell, of taſte, hearing, ſeeing, and touch, which being ſenſibly affected, give the perceptions of external objects.

The whole of any one object is not originally perceivable by the ſenſation of any one organ, although in the ſequel of our experience, we need no more to inform us of an object than ſome one of the perceptions by which it is known. Although we neither ſmell, taſte, hear, or ſee the ſolid dimenſion of a body, yet, having examined by the touch what we ſmell, taſte, hear, or ſee, we are from thenceforward, by any one or more of thoſe ſenſes, appriſed of bodies exiſting in the ſolid dimenſions of length, breadth, and thickneſs: We are appriſed of a fruit by its ſmell, or viſible appearance, and know what we ſhould feel if we touched it. The ſubject of a firſt perception is often traced to a ſecond; this to a third, a fourth, and ſo on, as far as we have any experience or knowledge in the ſyſtem of nature. Thus, the fragrance of the air in a ſummer's evening is traced to the exhalation of odours from the woods after a ſhower; and odour itſelf is traced to the evaporation of volatile ſubſtances that repleniſh the air we inſpire at the noſtrils. A rattling noiſe is traced to a carriage that is paſſing in the ſtreet; and ſound itſelf is traced to a tremulous motion produced in the air. Superficial figures having length and breadth, with a certain diſtribution of light and ſhade, may be traced either to a picture on a plain ſurface, or to the ſolid dimenſion of a body placed before any ground that ſerves to mark its contour. A circle or a triangle, properly ſhaded, may be traced either to a picture on canvaſs, or to a ſolid ſphere, a cone, or a pyramid, according to the outline within which the diſtribution of light and ſhade is made. Polygons fitly diverſified with light and ſhade, may be traced to pictures

of

of ſolids, whether regular or irregular, and under any combination of ſurfaces. Solid bodies, indeed, for the moſt part, may, by the eye, unaſſiſted with any other organ, be diſtinguiſhed from pictures, however artfully drawn; but, if there ſhould be any doubt, reſpecting any ſuch viſible appearance, the reality of a ſolid dimenſion may be fully aſcertained by the touch; and, from the organ of touch, perhaps, it is, that we are enabled to trace the viſible appearance of bodies, to ſolid dimenſions of any ſort.

Throughout a certain claſs of objects in nature, the feeling, or touch, is our ſureſt and laſt reſort for information. As we cannot either ſmell, taſte, nor hear, the ſolid dimenſions of bodies; a being reſtricted to the uſe of theſe organs would have no conception of extended or impenetrable matter. Body is perceived by the touch to be ſolid and inert, or reſiſting to change of ſtate. What, in reſpect to one degree of preſſure to the touch is hard; in reſpect to another, is ſoft: But the ultimate reſult of perception, in tangible bodies, is, that matter compreſſed to the utmoſt will be extended and excluſively occupy ſpace. And, although ſome are of opinion, that even ſolidity itſelf might be traced to ſomewhat elſe, as ſound is traced to a tremulous motion in the air; yet, to be entirely unknown, is, in reſpect to us, the ſame thing as not to exiſt *.

There are, indeed, ſubjects of perception in nature, which we cannot trace even to this ultimate point of reality. Light is perceived by the ſight, but not by the touch. Heat is perceived by the touch, but not through the means of its inertia or ſolid reſiſtance. The attractive powers of gravitation and magnetiſm are

* De ignotis et non exiſtentibus eadem eſt ratio.

perceived by their effects: Electricity is perceived by its light, and by the ſound or effect of its exploſions.

Things connected in nature are perceived, or perhaps rather inferred, one from another. Their connection, as Dr Reid has obſerved, gives to them mutually the effect of ſigns; and they may be preſented in any order one by another: Thus, charcoal and aſhes are the ſigns of recent fire, as the flames that riſe from combuſtible ſubſtances are the ſigns of materials about to be reduced to aſhes. Even corporeal appearances are the ſigns of mind: The animal frame in man, with many of its functions, ſerves to expreſs the operations of intellectual faculties. Order, or the combination of means in nature to the attainment of ends, is the ſign of intelligent power.

In many of theſe inſtances, perception approaches to the nature of inference, and is rather a derived and ſecondary than a primary and immediate ſource of information. The meaſure of its evidence varies, perhaps even declines in force, as it paſſes from the firſt deſcription of a primary ſource to that of a derived and conjectural means of information. Even under the firſt deſcription the evidence of perception is unequal in different inſtances. In ſome we receive it with caution, and grope our way amidſt ſenſible appearances, that we may not be deceived; in others the evidence of perception is unqueſtionable. But whether doubtful or certain, it is the only light with which we are furniſhed towards the diſcernment of reality in external things: Hence all we know of the earth and the heavens, of the ſun, planets, and fixed ſtars, of the air, the ſea, and the land, of minerals, plants, and animals, of property, of profit and loſs, of men and other mens minds, of our country, of ſuperiors, inferiors, or equals, of friends and ſtrangers, of parent and child, of juſtice or injuſtice;

in ſhort, of the whole world apart from ourſelves: And whoever rejects this evidence is reduced to think himſelf ſole in the predicament of exiſtence; ſo much that, if his mind be not already in a ſtate of infanity, he is far gone in the way to incur it.

A perſon, indeed, may doubt whether body be ſuch an exiſtence as he apprehends it; but no one who knows the import of his own words, can deny its reality.

Under the higheſt meaſures of conviction, which attend our perception of external things, truth does not appear to be neceſſary; and the reality may be different from the appearance that is perceived by us. What the maxim of wiſdom, with reſpect to perception, may be, we ſhall have occaſion to inquire, in conſidering the laws of evidence.

By teſtimony, we receive information of what others have perceived or known. In this form, we are willing both to give and to receive communication of knowledge. This is a part of our ſocial nature of much importance in this place; and ſtill more where we have occaſion to ſtate the moral obligations of faith and veracity, in the dealings and converſations of men.

Great part of what we know is derived from this ſource; as to it may be referred all that we learn from books, from hiſtory, or converſation. It may be of conſequence, however, in rating the value of ſuch information, to obſerve, that teſtimony can preſent us only with new combinations, of which the particulars themſelves, or conſtituent parts, before we can be made to underſtand the deſcription or enumeration in which they are conveyed, muſt have been previouſly known by conſciouſneſs or perception. The combination may be new, but muſt conſiſt of particulars alrea-

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dy conceived. Seas of milk and ſhips of amber are objects new and ſtrange: But ſea, milk, ſhip, and amber, muſt have been previouſly conceived, to make way for ſuch fictions. Where the previous conception of elements is wanting, it were vain to think of conveying information of a ſubject, by enumerating the particulars of which it is compoſed. This were to ſpeak in words which are not underſtood. The traveller may inform us of a land, mountainous or plain, wooded or clear, ſtocked with animals of a particular deſcription, inhabited by men of a particular figure, ſtature, and form: He may even feign any combination of things; but, as his accounts are communicated in words, or in the names of particulars ſo combined, the meaning, as well as the name muſt have been previouſly known, for us to conceive the aſſemblage under which they are preſented. This fact is material, and ſhould be attended to in aſcribing to their different ſources the benefits to be derived from perſonal obſervation and experience, on the one hand, or the ſubſequent enlargement of knowledge that may be derived from books or information, on the other. A treatiſe on colour, read to the blind, would to him be void of meaning; or, in ſearch of a meaning, perhaps be referred to ſome conception of ſound. Could the deaf be told of ſound, he would probably recur to ſome conception of colour or mental affection, of which he is conſcious: And it is thus, probably, that, while we read of ſubjects of which the conſtituent parts are unknown to us, we ſubſtitute ſomewhat elſe inſtead of that to which our reading relates, and, in fact, receive no real or uſeful information on the ſubject. A perſon, who had never ſeen troops in the field, will not learn from the Commentaries of Cæſar, or the Memoirs of Turenne.

Teſtimony, in the courts of law, is a principal ſource of information, and that on which the title of evidence is ſpecially be-

ſtowed; inſomuch, that the term, witneſs and evidence, are promiſcuouſly applied. Even when circumſtances are admitted in proof, thoſe circumſtances are taken from the teſtimony of witneſſes.

We preſume the witneſs to ſpeak truth, as we preſume the mirror to reflect the image that was caſt upon it: But the evidence of teſtimony is ſo far inferior to that of perception, as it brings the additional defects which lie open to doubt, with reſpect to the competence of the witneſs, his capacity of obſervation, or his caution to avoid being himſelf deceived; his veracity, the inducements he may have to deceive, or his ability to reſiſt them.

The terms credible, doubtful, or incredible, ſeem peculiarly applicable to this ſpecies of evidence; and belief, or diſbelief, are its ſpecific effects. The circumſtances that enforce the credit of a witneſs, his known veracity, his want of any temptation to depart from it, or his declaration being the reverſe of what his temptations would lead him to make, as they carry the evidence of teſtimony to its higheſt meaſure, may amount in their effect to entire conviction.

Circumſtances, that make for or againſt the credit of a witneſs, may be ſo balanced as to make belief hang in ſuſpence, or circumſtances unfavourable to his credit may ſo preponderate as to quite overthrow it.

Belief and aſſent, which are due to a credible teſtimony, expreſs the degree of confidence with which we reſt on a probable opinion; but are inadequate to expreſs the effect of conſciouſneſs or perception. In theſe the evidence and conviction are inſeparable. Although we may ſay that we know a truth, of which we

we are conſcious, or which we perceive; yet, to ſay that we are conſcious of it, or that we perceive it, is enough, and amounts to conviction or knowledge. Inquiries, therefore, into the cauſe of belief, in matters of conſciouſneſs, or evident perception, appear to be miſplaced, and only inſinuate a queſtion, where nature has refuſed to admit of a doubt*.

Under the fourth title, or that of inference, there remains to be conſidered yet another road to the attainment of knowledge. In this we collect, from facts or circumſtances previouſly admitted, ſome farther information which would of itſelf, or otherwiſe, be wanting.

The facts or circumſtances admitted may be founded in conſciouſneſs, perception, teſtimony, or even previous argument; and are termed the data or premiſes, while that which is inferred from them, is termed the concluſion: and the evidence will be proportioned to that of the premiſes, and to the connection which leads to infer the concluſion. The evidence of inference or argument, therefore, will partake in that of conſciouſneſs, perception, or teſtimony, according as the premiſes are derived from one or other of theſe ſources. It will decline as that of the premiſes declines; and, even where theſe are certain, will become doubtful, in proportion as the connection between the premiſes and the concluſion may be queſtioned.

Things are connected in nature as cauſe and effect, as general and particular, or as ordinary concomitants; and, on theſe varieties

* We muſt not ſay, with the ſceptic, that nature has given us ideas or impreſſions of things, and left us to collect the reality of an object from thence: She has given us perception; and this is at once a knowledge of its object.

ties of connection, inference of various evidence is founded. From a given cauſe we infer an effect; or, from a given effect, we infer a cauſe: From the weight of the atmoſphere, we infer what ſhall be the height of a column of a given fluid in the barometer; or, from that height, at a particular time, we infer the actual preſſure or weight of the atmoſphere in its ſtate then preſent.

From a general law of nature, or from a generic deſcription, we infer the fact in particular inſtances, or we claſs individuals under the genera to which they belong. From a ſufficient number of facts, we infer a law of nature; or, from the agreement of many individuals in one ſet of qualities, we infer or we collect a generic deſcription.

From one or any part of the circumſtances, that are uſually obſerved together, we infer the whole; or, from the general appearance of an object, infer ſome particular part. The mathematician reaſons from his own definition; the lawyer, from the ſtatute or practice of his country; the metaphyſician, from his primary conception of being and its attributes; the phyſiologiſt either, by ſome adequate enumeration of facts, inveſtigates a law of nature, or, to explain a particular phenomenon, applies a law of nature he has previouſly conceived or eſtabliſhed.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Of the Laws or Canons of Evidence.

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AMONG the felicities incident to human nature, next to a temper correct and reſolute, we may reckon a judgement undiſturbed in the diſcernment of truth. Theſe advantages are indeed connected together: The temper is ſupported by juſt conceptions of things; and, if our conceptions are miſtaken or embaraſſed, we muſt ſuffer proportionally, in reſpect to every circumſtance in the condition of mind.

The proper uſe of diſcernment, in relation to what we admit as truth, may indeed be conſidered as an article of wiſdom, and a branch of the moral ſcience; but, as we have this intereſt at ſtake, no leſs when we reaſon than when we act, it may not be improper to touch upon it in this place, or immediately in the ſequel of the facts, now ſtated, reſpecting the ſources of knowledge.

The errors to which we are expoſed, in the admiſſion or in the rejection of evidence, may be on either extreme, of indiſcrimi-

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nate credulity, on the one hand, or indiſcriminate ſcepticiſm on the other. With the credulous, every appearance and every report paſſes undiſtinguiſhed and unqueſtioned. With the ſceptic, every doctrine is a ſubject of cavil, and the deſpair of knowledge is ſubſtituted for caution in the ſelection of truth.

To guard againſt the firſt of theſe errors, we are to diſtinguiſh what is conſiſtent with the order of nature, and to require, in ſupport of every tenet, the evidence with which it ſhould naturally be attended if true.

We are not to believe, upon the atteſtation of others, what, if true, we ourſelves ought to be conſcious of, or ſhould have perceived. We are not to believe, upon the report of one witneſs, what, if true, many others ſhould be equally ready to atteſt.

Affecting to ſecure the foundations of knowledge, ſome have ſet out with a maxim, that no tenet or fact is to be admitted without evidence. This is undoubtedly true; but the meaning of evidence muſt be explained before the maxim can be ſafely applied.

If, by the term evidence, we mean a ſufficient cauſe of knowledge; conſciouſneſs and perception are of all others the preferable grounds of aſſent or conviction: But, if the term evidence be reſtricted to any particular cauſe of belief, ſuch as teſtimony, or argument, the maxim ought to be rejected; for many things are to be admitted as true, which cannot receive confirmation either from teſtimony or argument.

Whatever we are conſcious of, or whatever we perceive, has an evidence prior to argument or teſtimony; and it is indeed from

premiſes ſo known, that we are enabled, in the conſtruction of argument, to infer the moſt certain concluſions: But, as teſtimony has uſurped the name of evidence in the courts of law, argument or inference has uſurped it no leſs in the diſcuſſions of ſcience. And the maxim, that no propoſition is to be received without evidence, is ſuppoſed to imply the neceſſity of argument in ſupport of every truth.

Hence Des Cartes thought it neceſſary to ſtate an argument in proof of his own exiſtence, before he would proceed, upon that ſuppoſition, to treat of any thing elſe. This limited application of the term evidence, more than we are apt to imagine, may be the cauſe of that ſcepticiſm which diſputes the aſſent, if not to matters of conſciouſneſs, at leaſt to thoſe of perception, or any other the moſt evident facts.

It is obvious, that the force of an argument partly conſiſts in the evidence of premiſes or of truths previouſly known, or better known than the concluſion inferred from them: And, for this reaſon, whatever is already equally or better known, than any premiſes from which we can propoſe to infer it, cannot be eſtabliſhed by argument. The ſceptic, therefore, who requires argument in ſupport of every aſſumption, muſt begin to doubt preciſely at the point at which the truth is moſt certainly known.

It is probably in this limited ſenſe of the term, that the ſceptic requires evidence, before he admits the perceptions of ſenſe. In deciding on the truth of perception, indeed, we have ſometimes to examine the informations of one ſenſe by thoſe of another; and, where obſervation is doubtful, in one or a few inſtances, we repeat the ſame obſervation in many, and bring every competent organ of ſenſe to our aid: But, when we have done

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ſo much, or when our perception is already clear and determinate, we have no farther reſource, and have not any previous data on which to eſtabliſh the faith of what we perceive.

While we admit the maxim, that no information is to be received without the evidence it muſt have had if true, we muſt alſo admit the converſe; that, in matters within our cogniſance, and on which a deciſion is required of us, information, ſupported by all the evidence it could have had if true, ought to be ſuſtained as ſufficient to command our belief. What we ourſelves cannot have perceived muſt be admitted on the credible report of other: What has not paſt in the preſence of witneſſes, muſt be admitted, or rejected, on the credit of the circumſtances which ſerve to evince or diſprove it. To reject ſuch information, were to ſhut up the mind againſt the admiſſion of knowledge, and to reject the guide which nature had furniſhed for our direction through life.

Scepticiſm, no doubt, by reſtraining credulity, may guard againſt one ſpecies of error, but, carried to extreme, would diſcourage the ſearch of truth, ſuſpend the progreſs of knowledge, and become a ſpecies of palſy of all the mental powers, whether of ſpeculation or of action.

The ſceptic, indeed, ſometimes affects to diſtinguiſh the provinces of ſpeculation and of action. While, in ſpeculation, he queſtions the evidence of ſenſe; in practice, he admits it with the moſt perfect confidence: But ſpeculations in ſcience are ſurely of little account, if they have not any relation to ſubjects of actual choice and purſuit; and if they do not prepare the mind for the diſcernment of matters, relating to which there is actual occaſion to decide, and to act, in the conduct of human life.

Upon the whole, we may venture to ſum up the law of aſſent or diſſent, reſpecting either extreme of credulity or ſcepticiſm, in the following terms, "That, as it were abſurd to believe "without evidence, or to affect knowledge where nature has not "furniſhed any means of information; ſo it were equally abſurd "and ruinous in its conſequences to reject, in any matter of im-"portance, the only means of information which nature has fur-"niſhed."

SECTION

SECTION V.

Of Obſervation.

IN reſpect to mere conſciouſneſs or perception, it is probable that all men are nearly alike; ſo far at leaſt as they are poſſeſſed of the ſame ſubjects of conſciouſneſs, and the ſame organs of ſenſe. But there is an article of intelligence ſubſequent to theſe in which individuals appear greatly to differ.

We often perceive, and are conſcious of things which we ſuffer to eſcape our obſervation. This act of the mind pre-ſuppoſes conſciouſneſs, perception, or information ſomehow received; but is the voluntary act of a mind intent that nothing ſhall eſcape which may gratify curioſity, may be turned to uſe, or which in any way merits attention.

It is probable that minds differ originally in reſpect to this quality, and that they who have it moſt, poſſeſs intelligence itſelf in the higheſt degree, or at leaſt are likely to be moſt diſtinguiſhed in the uſe of their faculties.

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As obſervation is the firſt voluntary effort of our diſtinctive nature, the defect of it is likely to mar the advantages to be reaped from thence:——If we overlook in the objects around us, the circumſtances in which they concern us, if we are ignorant of their conſequences, and thus unprepared for the ſcene in which we are deſtined to act, our lives are likely to be a ſeries of error, folly, and diſappointment.

If we overlook the characteriſtical qualities by which ſubjects may be diſtinguiſhed or claſſed, the world, in reſpect to us, yet remains in a ſtate of confuſion or chaos: If we overlook the more important relations of action and paſſion, by which parts are combined in the living order of nature, we remain inſenſible to that magnificent ſcene which the univerſe preſents, and in the contemplation of which we are deſtined to find the higheſt and moſt improving exerciſe of our faculties.

Nature, indeed, has placed in our way many occaſions which excite obſervation, however little we may intend the exerciſe of our reaſon in this particular, and however dull and ſupine we may be in reſpect to matters that do not immediately affect our ſenſes with pleaſure or pain. Few things are ſo far indifferent to men of ordinary underſtanding as not in ſome degree to engage their attention. The perceived importance of any one particular, leads the obſervation to whatever is connected with it Even things which are overlooked when ſeparately preſented, will appear ſtriking when ſtated in compariſon or contraſt one with another. The multiplicity and reſemblance, or variety and diverſity, therefore, of objects that occur in the ſyſtem of nature, are powerful incitements to obſervation and thought.

Whatever

Whatever has a relation to ourſelves, whether by its tendency to hurt or to benefit, is an object of paſſion, averſion, or deſire, and can eſcape obſervation only from thoſe who are yet unappriſed of its power.

Inadvertence in many is corrected only by experience, and they are ſlow of forming any concerted deſign of obſervation or of action. Yet man is deſtined to act from deſign, and to anticipate the future from the obſervation of the paſt. The part on which he enters is by him previouſly conceived, however he may ſuffer himſelf to be diverted from it by incidental occaſions. And he is deſtined to chooſe, and intentionally to purſue, the means by which he is enabled to accompliſh his end. He goes in ſearch of important matter, even where it is not preſented to his firſt obſervations, and is qualified to conſtruct the fabric of knowledge or ſcience reſpecting his own and other natures, in a form to which caſual and unexamined appearances might never have conducted his thoughts.

In the ſtudy of viſible and mechanical ſubjects men have, in latter ages, purſued their obſervations in the way of experiment, a name formerly unknown to the world. They have not been contented with obſerving what nature preſents in her ordinary courſe; they have deviſed new circumſtances, and varied the conjunctures in which the operation to be obſerved is repeated, in order that the variety it preſents, in different conjunctures, may lead to a diſcernment of the cauſe from which it proceeds. In one experiment, a ſuppoſed cauſe is ſet to operate by itſelf, without any concurring circumſtance; in another the cauſe in queſtion is entirely excluded; in order to judge from the effect

in one caſe, or the want of effect in the other, how far the phenomenon to be explained actually proceeds from the cauſe alleged. Thus, in the experiments of Torricelli and Paſchall, the preſſure of the atmoſphere was admitted on the ſurface of a fluid into which the inverted tube was immerſed, or it was excluded; and the experiment was tried with fluids of different ſpecific gravity; from all which it appeared, that the column ſuſpended kept pace with the preſſure of the atmoſphere, and was ſuch in the different fluids of mercury or water, as that preſſure could balance. In ſuch trials as theſe, the operation of a cauſe which in the ordinary courſe of things might have forever remained unobſerved, was forced into view, and placed beyond the poſſibility of doubt or miſtake. The phenomena of ſuction were familiarly known, and the pump was conſtructed to obtain its effect; but the cauſe remained in obſcurity, until the Torricellian experiments brought it to light. Other branches of ſcience have attained to the moſt beautiful form through a ſeries of concerted experiments; ſuch as are exemplified in the theory of light and colour by Newton, of electricity by Franklin, of chemiſtry by Black, Lavoiſier, and other ingenious men.

This, however, is a method of obſervation which cannot be equally purſued in the ſtudy of human nature, or of human affairs, as in certain departments of the material ſyſtem. No man is ſo much the maſter of his fellow-creatures, as to claim the right of expoſing them to the riſk of a trial, of which the reſult may be calamitous or fatal; no one is willing to make ſuch experiments reſpecting himſelf. But, in the nature of man, where the operation of every principle, whether of affection or paſſion is known to every mind, and where the conjunctures in which they actually operate are ſufficiently varied in the ordi-

nary courſe of things, the uſe of concerted experiment is not equally neceſſary.

Men have ſufficiently varied their trials on the effect of external accommodations, diverſity of manners, and forms of policy. Every one may obſerve for himſelf the effect of ſuch variations, whether amounting to happineſs or miſery. And if he err, it is not want of experience that miſleads him; but preſumptive opinions conceived without examination, and ſuffered to remain even in oppoſition to the experience he has actually had.

In this matter we have not only to cultivate the powers of obſervation, but to acquire alſo that force of mind which may give to obſervation its proper effect. There is no object of human concern on which the dulleſt of minds has not already imbibed ſome opinion; and opinions formed into habits of thinking do not give way even to conviction. They may be ſupplanted by a different or contrary habit of thinking; but often ſet inſtruction, mere information, or even conviction at defiance. Of this we need no other example, than that of a perſon, who, although he is convinced that all the tales of ghoſts and apparitions he ever heard are fabulous, yet trembles in entering a church yard or burial vault in the dark.

SECTION VI.

Of Memory.

PART. I. CHAP. II. SECT. VI.

AS Obſervation is the meaſure of attention beſtowed on ſubjects, whether paſt, preſent, or to come, ſo Memory is the continued poſſeſſion or power of recollecting what we continue to know of a ſubject formerly perceived.

Although, under the ſeparate titles of underſtanding and of will, we ſeem to have adopted a diſtinction that is ſufficiently accurate, ſo as to have excluded from the one every paſſion, affection, or active propenſity, and from the other every act of apprehenſion or of conception conſtituent of mere knowledge; yet, in ſtating particulars, we are reminded that the operations we enumerate under either title, are not the ſeparate parts of a divided ſubject, but the occaſional and often joint operations and functions of one and the ſame intelligent power. The ſame mind that affects the poſſeſſion of an object already known, alſo affects the knowledge of it; and underſtanding itſelf, prior to the impulſe of any ſpecial affection, is directed by an active propenſity, which we term curioſity.

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As obſervation is the energy of mind aware of importance in the nature of its object, ſo memory is an active function continuing to graſp the ſubjects of knowledge. It is modified by a variety of original propenſities and diſpoſitions. We are diſpoſed to retain what we have obſerved or known. We are diſpoſed to recollect particulars under the ſame combination, and in the ſame order, in which they we preſented. Hence the unity of a ſubject, though conſiſting of many ſeparable parts, is attended in us with unity of conception.

This important law of our nature is, by Mr Hobbes, as we have already mentioned, termed the coherence of thoughts, and, by Mr Locke, the aſſociation of ideas. Its phenomena are of mighty conſequence, whether in the contemplative or active purſuits of mind. In every act of contemplation, as in the functions of memory in particular, we are diſpoſed to connect ſubjects together in our thoughts as we have found them connected in nature, whether by contiguity of time or place, ſimilitude, or the more important relations of cauſe or effect.

Mere contiguity of time or of place is an accidental connection; but, in paſſing from one ſubject of thought to another, the effect of it can never be reſiſted, even by thoſe who are apprized of the other and more important relation of ſubjects.

The preſentment of any one thing revives the memory of many others which are in any way connected with it. The ſight of an acquaintance recals the ſcene of our familiarity, or the ſcene recals the acquaintance; and we are told of perſons, who,

being furniſhed with a leading expreſſion or ſentence in a page they had read, could, from the mere contiguity of words in a paſſage of any length, repeat the whole. This is to have things by rote, without any underſtanding or comprehenſion of their nature. It is a talent, however, which may be turned to account, and is to be valued as we value the poſſeſſion of every ſubject that may be made ſubſervient to any valuable purpoſe.

Similitude, in one degree, is the relation of different ſpecies of the ſame genus; and, in yet a nearer degree, it is the relation of individuals of the ſame ſpecies. On theſe ſimilitudes, the arrangement of deſcriptive hiſtory depends; and, on this arrangement comprehenſion of thought and retention of memory, to a great extent, may be founded.

The relation of cauſe and effect, of which we are originally conſcious in the efforts of mind, and the intended effect of thoſe efforts, is afterwards ſuppoſed to exiſt alſo in the concomitancy of other ſubjects and events. When any number of effects can be traced to the ſame cauſe, they are ſaid to be underſtood. They are retained in a ſingle act of comprehenſion or memory; and remembrance, in this caſe, is a continuing to underſtand what we have once well underſtood.

From the whole of theſe facts we may collect the great advantage of order in the arrangement of particulars, to facilitate the remembrance of them. When things to be remembered however numerous, are ſo placed, that the relation of contiguity concurs with thoſe of ſimilitude, cauſe, and effect, in leading the memory from one to another, the taſk of recollection may be performed with proportional eaſe.

In performing this taſk, we actually avail ourſelves of the order in which things have been ſtated before us, and endeavour to paſs from what we do remember to that which we propoſe to recollect: But we may be aſked, upon this ſubject of recollection or intentional memory, in what ſenſe can we intend to remember what we have actually forgotten.

Intention, in every inſtance, implies a conception of what is intended; and the conception of a thing paſt, being the remembrance of it, would ſuperſede the intention to recal it again.

There is a myſtery in thought, which none of the corporeal images under which it has been expreſſed, can ſerve to illuſtrate. It is not a type, an impreſſion, or picture; for all theſe are particular, and contain at once all the parts that compoſe them; and the preſence of any one part is the preſence of the whole. An intention to recollect is an effort of the mind to review the particulars of a ſubject, of which ſome effect or concomitant circumſtance is conceived, and employed, as a thread that may lead through the whole.

Men are obſerved to differ from one another very much in the meaſure of this faculty: It is connected with underſtanding; for men continue long to remember what they have well underſtood: It is connected with obſervation alſo; and men continue to remember, in the ſame degree in which they have attentively obſerved the ſubjects of thought.

Memory is, like other operations of mind, much affected by the different conditions of the animal frame. In childhood, it is limited and of ſhort duration: The tranſactions of infancy, accordingly,

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accordingly, are not remembered in the periods of manhood or youth. Of theſe, indeed, the tranſactions are remembered in old age; but what paſſes in extreme old age itſelf is ſeldom retained from one day, even from one hour, to another.

In accounting for theſe phenomena, we ſometimes recur to mechanical ſimilies, and the analogy of impreſſions on materials ſoft, hard, or of ſome intermediate conſiſtence. The mind, we conceive, is like wax, which may be ſoftened too much to retain, or too little to receive, an impreſſion. In childhood, the material is too ſoft, and gives way to impreſſions, but does not retain them. In old age, it is hard, and retains the impreſſions formerly made; but does not receive any new ones. In manhood, the conſiſtence is at once proper to receive, and to retain the impreſſions which are made upon it. In this we have a perfect model of the analogical theories, or explanations of the human underſtanding, founded in ſimile that may paſs among poetic alluſions; but, in ſcience, only ſerves to confound the condition of different or oppoſite natures together.

We are conſcious of memory, as we are of perception, in the proper ſenſe of theſe words; and, though we know that perception is obtained by the intervention of animal organs, and even know, that memory is connected with a ſtate of the animal frame, yet we know not how either is conſtituted. Perception and memory are active exertions of mind, and not a mere figure or motion impreſſed on body. This diſtinction of activity in mind, and of paſſiveneſs in body, is retained in the grammatical forms of expreſſion. The mind perceives or remembers; body is impelled, ſtopped, or receives an impreſſion. And it cannot afford any ſatisfaction

tisfaction to be told, that a tranſition from one thought to another in mind is a mere change of place or of figure; or, that a figure or motion, ſomewhere retained, amounts to the memory of what is paſt in perception or thought. PART I. CHAP. II. SECT. VI.

SECTION

SECTION VII.

Of Imagination.

PART I. CHAP. II. SECT. VII.

IN the uſe of what we have any way conceived and remember, we have occaſion frequently, for the farther purpoſe of thought, to ſtate our ſubjects together or ſeparately, and one ſubject fully or partially, according to the intention of the mind in that inſtance. The firſt of theſe modes of conception may be termed Imagination, the other Abſtraction.

In imagination, we would ſtate our ſubject with all its qualities and circumſtances, and a plurality of ſubjects, in reſpect to all their relations of ſimilitude, analogy, or oppoſition; whereas, in abſtraction, we would conſider ſubjects, or parts of ſubjects, in ſome limited point of view, to which our reaſoning or thought in that inſtance is directed.

Any given ſubject may thus exerciſe either faculties of imagination or abſtraction. A mountain, for inſtance, may be to the poet or landſcape painter, an object of imagination; to the geometer

geometer an object of abſtraction. Artiſts of the firſt denomination ſtate to themſelves, or conceive at once its outline in the ſky; the woods, rocks, and precipices that diverſify its ſurface, and which riſe above one another in forming its aſcent. They may ſtate alſo the clouds that make a part in the back ground, the beaſts that paſture upon it, and the eagles that ſoar above in the ſky.

The ſame object may exerciſe alſo the powers of geometry, by which the artiſt may intend merely to meaſure its height; he, accordingly, ſtates to himſelf no more than a vertical line, that paſſes from its ſummit, at right angles, to its baſe. And this exerciſe of the mind is termed abſtraction, becauſe ſome one, or a few particulars, are taken into conſideration apart from the whole.

Imagination is the faculty which we employ in narration, deſcription, deſign, or invention. Abſtraction, that which we employ in generalization or in conceiving, as Plato would expreſs it, the one that runs through many individuals of the ſame ſpecies or genus.

The language of imagination is metaphor, allegory, ſimile, and antitheſis, or contraſt. Of this faculty it is the object in every inſtance to particularize; to preſent individuals in their ſeparate form; to fill up a deſign with a detail of all the parts it is projected to have; or in ſpeech to preſent the occaſions of affection and paſſion, and the grounds of conviction, in ſuch a manner, as to command the aſſent, and turn the whole force of the mind to a particular purpoſe.

PART I. CHAP. II. SECT. VII.

So far it ſhould appear that imagination is the ſpecific talent of the orator and poet; and of importance, alſo, in qualifying men to treat of affairs; for in theſe nothing is abſtract, or free from its particularities. Although in argument, ſingle points may be ſeparately diſcuſſed, and diſtinctneſs require the power of abſtraction, yet, in proceeding to act, the whole of every ſubject muſt be conceived together; for ſo it exiſts in nature, and ſo it muſt be expected to meet the perſon who would operate upon it, or conduct himſelf properly with reſpect to it. In ſpeculations on mechaniſm, moving preſſure, and friction may be conſidered apart; but, in practice, they occur and muſt be conſidered together. In ſpeculations on the military art, the nature of a country, of troops whether of horſe or foot, of arms, cannon or muſquetry, and above all, the nature of men to be commanded or led into action, may, for the ſake of diſtinctneſs, be conſidered apart, and each by itſelf furniſh matter of regular diſcourſe; but, in practice, the whole muſt be taken together; and the neglect of any part will fruſtrate the moſt ſpecious advantage of knowledge reſpecting the others.

Different men, either from nature or habit, are variouſly qualified either for imagination or abſtraction, and mutually look upon the talents in which they themſelves are defective with ſome degree of contempt; although it is evident that real ability conſiſts in a proper aſſemblage of both. The engineer can never know the amount of the different powers he is to employ, or of the reſiſtance he is to overcome, without conſidering each of them apart, ſo as to eſtimate its quantity; nor can he turn his ſcience to uſe, without being able to conceive how the whole is to be treated, when preſent at once, and operating together.

In

In imagination, ſubjects may be conſidered as ſingle and ſeparate, or as forming plurality and number of conſtituent parts.

In conſidering a plurality of ſubjects together, we have not only to conceive the ſeparate qualities, circumſtances, and peculiarities of each, we attend to their relations alſo, whether of ſimilitude, analogy, or oppoſition.

Similitude, or the repetition of like parts and qualities, is the foundation of claſſification, or leads to the arrangement of ſubjects in deſcriptive hiſtory.

Analogy is the repetition of like proportions, or correſponding relations. Things unlike may be analogous: Thus, the fin of a fiſh and the wing of a bird, the water of the ſea and the air of of the atmoſphere, are unlike; but there may be analogy between them; for, as the fin is to the water, ſo is the wing to the air, and ſo forth.

In conſequence of analogy, though in matters unlike, the names of operation and quality are transferred from one to another; as a bird may be ſaid to ſwim through the air, and a fiſh to fly in the water: and, in ſuch inſtance, according as the ſubject from which an expreſſion is borrowed is more familiar, more elevated, or mean, than that to which it is applied, the metaphor has a correſponding effect, in illuſtrating, in raiſing, or in ſinking the matter in which it is uſed. Thus, a perſon whom we would ſink in the public eſteem is ſaid to be obſcure; and a perſon who is ſuppoſed to be eminent for any talent or virtue is ſaid to ſhine. A perſon who ſpeaks with great force of expreſſion, is ſaid to thun-

der; or the breeze that gently ſtirs the leaves, in paſſing through a wood, is ſaid to ſigh, or to whiſper.

In the laviſh and profuſe application of metaphor, the ſeparate diviſions of nature are, in ſome meaſure, blended together. The intellectual, animal, vegetable, and mechanical kingdoms, receive the appellation of qualities one from the other. The magnetic needle *is faithful* and true to the pole. The lover is *attracted* by the charms of his miſtreſs. A thought is *heavy*, and memory is *effaced*. There is a *colliſion* of ſentiments, and the qualities of bodies are *adverſe* one to another. This is termed metaphorical language; may ſerve to vary a ſtile; to ſupply the defect of proper terms; to diſplay imagination, or help out the effect of rhetorical compoſition, in caſting the colours of one ſubject upon another. It is reckoned an ornament of ſtile: but, in the correct ſtatement of truth, the uſe of proper expreſſion, it muſt be confeſſed, has a beauty and elegance, which metaphorical language never can reach *.

Allegory like metaphor is founded in the ſuppoſed analogy of ſubjects: But as metaphor is accompliſhed in ſingle terms, allegory may be continued in relation or deſcription to any extent; while entire ſubjects with all the language that in propriety belongs to them are ſubſtituted one for the other.

But although, in the allegory, perſons or things of one kind only are preſented, it is intended that perſons or things of a different kind ſhould be conceived or underſtood. Thus, in the well known table or picture of Cebes, incloſures, fields, lawns, and rocky

* See the writings of Sir David Dalrymple paſſim.

rocky aſcents, interſperſed with figures and buildings of different deſcriptions, are meant to exhibit the circumſtances of human life, the characters and paſſions of men, with the event of their different occupations and purſuits.

Allegory may thus be conſidered as metaphor extended from ſingle qualities to many ſuch; and it may be continued through all the correſponding circumſtances and operations of nature, ſo far as the analogy is obvious. Or if it ſhould be far fetched and obſcure, the allegory may ſtill be underſtood with the help of a comment, or what is termed a key to diſcloſe it.

Allegories are ſometimes amuſing, and may ſerve to expreſs, in a diſguiſed or artful way, what, more directly ſtated, might be offenſive or leſs agreeable: But allegories are otherwiſe ſeldom inſtructive. A very common thought may appear ingenious in its allegorical dreſs, from the ingenuity and aptneſs of preſentation of one thing for another; or it may appear profound, from the difficulty of perceiving what is meant under a far fetched ſubſtitution: But talents are ſurely miſapplied, in rendering that difficult in allegory which, directly expreſſed, would be familiar and eaſy.

In theſe obſervations, our object is not to analyſe figures of rhetoric, but merely to illuſtrate, by reference to ſome effects of imagination, a faculty which is of ſo much importance in the hiſtory of mind.

Even ſimile, too, notwithſtanding the meaning of the term, proceeds upon the analogy, rather than the identity or ſimilitude of ſubjects. If the object of ſimile were to point out ſubjects

jects that were like. What more like the action and character of one man than the action and character of another: Yet ſuch compariſons are never uſed in poetry. Diomed is never ſaid to have fought like Achilles, nor Ajax like Idomeneus. The hoſt of Greeks is not compared to any other multitude of men; but to a ſwarm of bees. The warrior, who bravely maintains his poſt is compared to a rock in the ſea, beat by the ſurge, but immoveable. The hoſt of angels, moving their ſpears at the ſignal of command, is compared to a field of corn waving in the wind. Even Ajax, in his unwilling and ſlow retreat from a multitude of enemies, is compared, not to any other man in like circumſtances, but to an aſs, who quits the field of corn with reluctance, and does not mend his pace, though aſſailed by all the ſticks and ſtones of the village.

Contraſt is alſo an effort of imagination, in which the oppoſition of ſubjects is brought into view. Things oppoſite are ſo ſtated, as that the qualities in which they ſtand oppoſed, become the more perceptible or ſtriking. Thus colours are contraſted in painting, virtues and vices, knowledge and ignorance, parts and incapacity, in the characters and diſpoſitions of men.

Contraſt is the reverſe of ſimile, and antitheſis the reverſe of metaphor. When they ariſe naturally from the ſubject, they conſtitute an ornament of ſtyle, and may be of great force in promoting its effects, but crowded improperly betray affectation and give diſguſt.

SECTION

SECTION VIII.

Of Abſtraction.

WE have, in the laſt ſection, taken the benefit of contraſt, in placing the definitions of imagination and abſtraction together. In the one, a ſubject is ſtated in all its qualities and circumſtances; in the other, one or a few points are taken for ſeparate conſideration.

Some degree of abſtraction is expreſſed in every general term, and indeed in every word of a language, except in the proper names which are affixed to mere individuals. In the term animal, we abſtract what is common to all living creatures, from what is peculiar to any ſpecies or genus. The ſhepherd, in talking of his flock, can tell of what is common to the kind, without entering into the peculiarities of any individual. The poſtman can exact his hire for the length of the road, without any regard to its breadth. The geometer does no more, when he reaſons of lines, or of length, without breadth; and of ſurfaces, or of length and breadth, without thickneſs; even of points or mere place,

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without any dimenſion whatever: He knows, in the mean time, that every body, and every ſpace, actually has all the dimenſions of length, breadth, and thickneſs, and cannot be imagined without them.

In ſtating the laws of nature, we abſtract what is common and uniform in many operations, from what is ſingular, and ſerves to diverſify particular inſtances. In metaphyſics or ontology, we abſtract what is common or univerſal to all beings, from the multiplicity of diſtinctive and ſeparate qualities. The language of ſcience, in this manner, becomes abſtruſe and intricate to the vulgar. And abſtraction, or metaphyſical reaſoning, in which it is carried to the greateſt height, is another name for what is incomprehenſible or difficult: But it is, in reality, no more than a continuation of what is performed by the feebleſt underſtanding, in treating things of a kind, under their generic or common appellations.

How far ordinary minds proceed in this matter, without affecting the heights of ſcience, may be learned from the ſtructure of the moſt vulgar dialect, in which every term, that is not a mere proper name, is expreſſive of ſome abſtraction.

If a language, even that of a ſavage nation, contain the generic terms of animal and vegetable, or univerſal terms of ſubſtance, quality, quantity, and ſo on; ſo far, may we be aſſured that the people who ſpeak that language, even the moſt rude, have abſtracted; and, ſo far, the direct operation is familiar to every one: Although the reflex act of the mind, in recollecting and ſtating what the mind itſelf has done, is reſerved for men of ſpeculation and ſcience.

We may obſerve in nature a variety of ſubjects, which, being applicable to ſome purpoſes in human life, are ſaid to be uſeful; and hence, without taking into our account the reſpective purpoſe which any one ſubject in particular may ſerve, we admit its utility; and refer to this general predicament timber, ſtone, metals plants animals, and whatever elſe, though indefinitely varied, agree in the circumſtance of being uſeful to man.

We obſerve alſo a variety of ſubjects which are, in themſelves, or in their place, excellent and beautiful. The eye, the hand, and the foot, are beautiful in their ſtructure, and contribute to beauty in the frame of which they are a part. In the uſe of the abſtract term, beauty, we overlook the peculiarities of any particular ſubject, to ſtate what is common to this with other beautiful ſubjects or forms. Beauty may be reſolved into excellence; and is one of the aſpects of what is good. In what nature of things it is conſtituted, we ſhall have occaſion to conſider in purſuing, to its different applications, the important diſtinction of good and evil. In the mean time, it is mentioned merely in illuſtration of that operation of mind, which we term abſtraction.

As, in the uſe of this faculty, entity is the ſubject of metaphyſics or ontology, as quantity is the ſubject of geometry; ſo the abſtract form of an operation in nature is a phyſical law, and its application the conſtituent of phyſical ſcience. The abſtract form and expreſſion of what is excellent or good, is a moral law, and a principle of moral ſcience.

SECTION IX.

Of Science.

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IN nature all the ſubjects preſented to our obſervation are individual, and marked with their particular qualities and circumſtances. In the exerciſe of imagination or fancy, we proceed after the model of nature, and particularlize whatever we conceive for any purpoſe of contemplation, deſign, or invention. But, if we would collect many particulars under one or a few general titles, we muſt abſtract the conditions in which they agree from thoſe in which they differ.

As imagination, therefore, may be termed the faculty of particularization, abſtraction may be termed the faculty of generalization.

This faculty, applied to matters of deſcription, gives the ſpecies and genera of things; applied to the ſucceſſion of events, gives the laws of nature; and applied to matters of choice, gives the laws of morality.

The

The phyſical laws of nature may be collected from a ſufficient number of particulars which, though differing in circumſtances, and diverſified in their appearances, ſuggeſt a general fact common to many operations. Thus, the law of gravitation, or the preſſure of bodies in the vertical line, is traced through all the phenomena of *weight* in bodies at reſt, of *acceleration* in falling bodies, of *retardation* in aſcending bodies, of *vibration* in pendulums, and of the *curvature* deſcribed in projectiles, and ſo forth.

The law being thus aſcertained, it is applied to the explanation of many phenomena which, of themſelves, would never have ſuggeſted the law. Such are the varying preſſures of fluids on the bottoms and ſides of veſſels proportioned not to their quantity or abſolute weight, but to their depth or altitude. Such are the ebbing and flowing of the ſea, the proceſſion of the equinoxes, the revolution of planets in their orbits, and ſo forth; of which the explanations, ſo obtained, are termed theories of the reſpective phenomena to which they belong.

In this manner, phyſical ſcience is conſtituted, and particulars are ſaid to be underſtood and ſcientifically known when we can refer them to the phyſical laws under which they are comprehended.

The object of phyſical ſcience being fact and reality, it is evident that mere hypotheſis cannot be ſubſtituted for a law of nature, nor any theory ſuſtained, in which the principle is not ſome known or exiſting law of nature, and its application ſufficient to explain the appearance. It is alſo evident that, where any appearance is comprehended in any well known law of nature, it is unneceſſary to ſeek for any other account or explanation of it. Such is the

tendency of the rules which Newton laid down to himſelf in proceeding to explain the phenomena of the planetary ſyſtem.

Science is ſometimes defined the knowledge of cauſes and their effects in nature. But cauſe and effect, ſo far as we are enabled to conceive their relation, are terms of the ſame meaning with thoſe we have employed, namely, *law of nature*, and *its phenomena*.

The relation of cauſe and effect is familiarly conceived; but metaphyſicians are not agreed on the origin of this conception. Some are of opinion, that it originates in the mere conjunction or concomitancy of one thing with another; as in the conjunction of expanſion with heat, or of motion with impulſe, and ſo forth.

Mere conjunction, however, will not account for the notion of cauſe and effect; for things are conjoined without ſuggeſting any ſuch relation between them; as the waves that break on the ſhore; the leaves, bloſſoms, and fruit, that come in ſucceſſion through the ſpring and ſummer. Nor could mere conjunction, without a previous notion of this relation ever ſuggeſt any thing beſides contiguity of time or place.

The relation of cauſe and effect is probably conceived firſt in the mind itſelf; in the relation of its own efforts to their intended effect; in the relation of evidence to the conviction produced by it: And the relation being thus previouſly conceived, may be afterwards preſumed to exiſt on the credit of ſigns or proofs, which appear ſufficient to evince its reality in any particular inſtance; as in the caſe of things uniformly obſerved together, and in the ſame proportions.

Where

Where this is the caſe, we aſſume the relation of cauſe and effect; and, as there is a neceſſary connection betwixt evidence and belief, we aſſume alſo, not the mere concomitancy, but the neceſſity of an effect from its cauſe, and converſely the neceſſity of a cauſe to the production of an effect. It is confeſſed nevertheleſs by metaphyſicians, that, notwithſtanding this aſſumed neceſſity of a cauſe to the production of every effect, the intimate nature of cauſality or operating power, is nowhere ſo known to us as to let us perceive its efficacy. And when we ſay, that gravitation is the cauſe of weight in bodies, we mean no more than that the weight of a body, whether at reſt or in motion, is a particular phenomenon of the general law, by which bodies preſs to the earth in the vertical line.

When we do not perceive a cauſe, we are apt to imagine one, and thus ſubſtitute imagination to ſupply the defect of our knowledge. It is ſafer, therefore, to acknowledge our ignorance in this matter, and to aim at the inveſtigation of laws, in which we may actually ſucceed, and in which we cannot miſtake hypotheſis for fact and reality, than to uſe a term which is ambiguous in its meaning, and under which we may ſubſtitute ſuppoſition and fancy, for obſervation in aſſigning the cauſes of things.

Sir Iſaac Newton, in his theory of the planetary ſyſtem, ſhewed that the phenomena are comprehended in the well-known laws of motion and gravitation, familiar in the terreſtrial ſpaces, and equally applicable to the heavens.

Des Cartes, in ſearch of a cauſe for the planetary revolutions, ſuppoſed the ſpace in which they move to be repleniſhed with matter,

ter, and that matter to be in motion, in the manner of a whirlpool or vortex. Here is ſuppoſition upon ſuppoſition, without any evidence of reality; an error which is more likely to be committed while in ſearch of cauſes, which may be ſuppoſed occult, than while we inveſtigate a law of nature, of which the very name implies a ſeries of facts well known to exiſt.

Although, therefore, we ſometimes define ſcience to be the knowledge of cauſes, and of their effects; yet it is ſafer and more accurate, or more congenial to the actual ſtate of our conception, to ſay that it is the knowledge of the laws of nature, comprehending a multiplicity of diverſified appearances, which the law may ſerve to explain.

The works of intelligent power are compriſed under general laws, or generic deſcriptions; and obſervation is gratified, in tracing particulars to the general titles, whether of deſcription or of phyſical law, in which they are comprehended. As creative intelligence proceeds in this form, the created mind cannot otherwiſe arrive at any maturity, or enlargement of knowledge.

So far, than, we have purſued the hiſtory of underſtanding, or the power cognitive, through its ſeveral functions of concioufneſs, perception, obſervation, memory, imagination, abſtraction, and ſcience.

Under the laſt of theſe titles, no doubt, we may include not only the application of generic principles to the explanation of phenomena, or particular appearances; but the application of moral principles alſo to direct the choice of voluntary agents.

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The laſt may be termed moral ſcience, and is a principal article in the hiſtory of Mind: But before we proceed to the conſideration of it, we muſt attend to the ſpecific principles of action and choice by which human nature is characterized.

SECTION

SECTION X.

Of the Primary Sources of Inclination in Human Nature.

PART. I. CHAP. II. SECT. X.

MAN, we have obſerved, though in general let looſe from the trammels of inſtinct, and left to obſerve and to chuſe for himſelf, yet, in ſome reſpects alſo, but a variety among the animals, is directed by inſtincts that precede the knowledge of his ends, or any experience of the means to be employed in obtaining them.

Of ſuch inſtinctive directions, in human nature, there are ſeveral examples: Such as the inſtinctive effort common to man, with the other animals, upon the contact of air, to ply the muſcles employed in reſpiration; and, upon application of the lip to the nipple, to ply the muſcles employed in ſuction. In theſe inſtances, complicated operations are performed, of which, the nature is ſo far from being underſtood by the infant who performs them, that it had baffled from time immemorial the ſearches of ſpeculative man, and is but recently known in the progreſs of ſcience.

To

To theſe we may add, the well-known inſtinctive abhorence of a precipice, by which man, as well as many of the other animals, is affected in looking down from a height. In this inſtance, the head grows giddy, and gives warning of danger, which certainly precedes the knowledge of what might be feared from a fall. To know this, we muſt ſuppoſe the party appriſed of the accelerating power of gravitation, which, continuing to operate in falls of a certain height, increaſe the velocity and force of the blow with which the falling body ſtrikes on the ground, ſo as neceſſarily to deſtroy life. Such knowledge animals, that tremble on their approach to a precipice, certainly have not; nor would it be ſafe for a man to have no other guide, in this matter, but his own experience and knowledge of the laws of gravitation and colliſion. The firſt trial he made might be fatal: And nature has kindly anticipated the effects of knowledge, in a certain feeling of dizzineſs and fear of falling, which keeps the perſon concerned from expoſing himſelf to ſuch dangers. Theſe warnings indeed, may become unneceſſary in proportion as thoſe who are accuſtomed to climb and look down from heights, learn to ſecure themſelves by proper expedients and preſence of mind; and the feeling is accordingly worn off, or abates by practice and time.

There are other examples of inſtinctive direction, which though not operating from the birth, or through the earlier periods of childhood, yet germinate in the progreſs of the animal frame, and, in the uſe of means, give a ſingular impetuoſity, to to which a knowledge of their end ſeldom contributes.

But the more general character of man's inclinations, or active

tive diſpoſitions, as we have already obſerved, is not that of a blind propenſity to the uſe of means, but inſtinctive intimation of an end, for the attainment of which he is left to diſcover and to chuſe, by his own obſervation and experience, the means that may prove moſt effectual.

Man is thus diſpoſed to preſerve himſelf; and the manner alſo is, in ſome degree, ſpecified or pointed out to him by the appetite of hunger, which forms a general direction to the uſe of food. Attention to his ſafety likewiſe is enforced by the painful ſenſations that warn him of his danger from fire, from extreme cold, from ſuffocation, impure air, wounds or hurts of any ſort: But the preciſe material with which hunger is to be gratified, and the preciſe expedients with which he may be ſecured from harm, are left, in a great meaſure, to his own choice in the reſult of his obſervation and experience.

In this manner, man is left to obſerve and to chuſe among the variety of ways which, in different ſituations, may be taken to ſupply his occaſions, whether in reſpect to ſubſiſtence, ſhelter, accommodation, or ornament; all of them recommended by nature under the general head of his preſervation and convenience, ſafety or well-being: But he is ſo far from being limited by his inſtincts to any particular ſpecies or form of materials for every purpoſe, as the beaver is limited in the particular conſtruction of his dam, or the bee in the form of his cell, and every bird in the materials and ſtructure of his airy or neſt; that he is diſpoſed to innovate on every practice, whether of nature or art; and finds occaſion to diverſify his manner wherever he is placed, or to whatever ſituation he is enabled to advance himſelf. Hence the multiplicity of arts which he is diſpoſed to practiſe, and in which his inventions

ventions ſo frequently varied continue to accumulate almoſt without end.

To the other animals appetite continues to be the ſole motive to action, and the animal, in every moment of time, proceeds upon the motive then preſent. But to man, the repeated experience of gratifications and croſſes, like the detail of particulars in any other inſtance, is matter of generalization: He collects from thence the predicaments of good and evil, and is affected towards any particular object, according as he has referred it to the one or to the other. In the intervals of any particular appetite or inſtinct, he can take meaſures to ſecure his good, or to avert his evil.

It has been obſerved that man has, in common with the other gregarious animals, a diſpoſition to aſſociate with his kind; but this, beyond the limits of a mere family connection, is not directed to any determinate form of ſociety. His company may be large or contracted, and his policy republic or monarchy. But, to whatever form it inclines or approaches, he ever meets with ſpecific inconveniencies, which he is deſirous to remove; or is preſented with ſome proſpect of advantage, which he is deſirous to gain: And ſociety itſelf is to him, like every other article in his condition, an occaſion of exerciſe or exertion to his intellectual as well as animal nature. Public juſtice and order are, therefore, to man a ſpecies of real good, and objects of deſire; public diſorder and wrong a ſpecies of evil, and correſponding objects of averſion.

Animals, in general, have inſtinctive propenſities to the uſe of their organs; and man, we may add, to the uſe of his faculties:

He repudiates whatever tends to reſtrain him, and is glad of occaſions that call forth the exerciſe of his powers. Confinement and freedom are therefore to him among the principal conſtituents of good or of evil.

In his relation to other men he has indefinite ſcope for the exerciſe of his active diſpoſitions. The family to which he is attached, the friend he loves, the public cauſe he has eſpouſed, furniſh him with ſo many intereſts to be guarded or purſued together with his own. As he is not indifferent to the objects around him as they concern himſelf, no more is he indifferent to their preſence or abſence in the lot of other men with whom he has a general ſympathy of commiſeration or joy.

Whatever the individual may incline to obtain or avoid for himſelf, he may alſo have at heart for his friend or his country; and hence we derive the diſtinction of ſelfiſh and ſociable in the characters of men.

In nature at large we are ſurrounded with ſpecimens of beauty and deformity, of excellence and defect. We have not names for the particular faculties by which theſe objects are diſtinguiſhed; or rather the diſtinction is conceived to exiſt in the nature of things, and intelligence itſelf is ſuppoſed a competent power of diſcernment. The general ſilence of language reſpecting any other faculty is a preſumption that no ſeparate appellation of that kind is required.

In judging of what is excellent or beautiful, we diſcriminate the frame and combination of material ſubjects, as well as the condition of living and intelligent natures. To the latter, however,

ever, chiefly the diſtinction of excellence and defect refers. The good and the ill, that is apprehended in the character of mind, we eſteem or reprobate in ourſelves and others, with ſupreme affection or diſlike.

In the diſtinction of excellence and defect, we find the occaſions of various paſſions; as of pride, vanity, emulation, magnanimity, or elevation of mind, that keep pace with the applications of excellence whether erroneous or juſt. The general diſpoſition to excel, next to intereſt, is the moſt ordinary, and even more than intereſt, a powerful motive to action, and an occaſion of the greateſt exertions incident to human nature. To this we may refer the honeſt man's integrity, which he will not forego to preſerve his life; the gentleman's honour, to which he is ready to ſacrifice every conſideration of eaſe or ſafety; the ſoldier's glory; and the martyr's crown.

The mere inſtinct of a gregarious animal is, in human nature, but the ſmalleſt part of the ſocial character. Beſides the mutual diſpoſition of the ſexes; of parent and child; the predilection of friends; and the affection of citizens to their country; already mentioned as the principles upon which ſocieties of a particular denomination are formed, or maintained; there is a principle of ſympathy and indiſcriminate concern in the condition of a fellow creature, whether proſperous or adverſe; to which, as congenial to man, even where it operates in pity towards any other animal, we give the name of humanity: There is an eſteem of merit, and a love of juſtice; there is a reprobation of wickedneſs, and an indignation at wrongs; all of them turning upon the diſtinction of benevolence and malice, or upon the fitneſs or unfitneſs of the individual to fill his place in ſociety, as a part well adapted to ſuch a whole.

To mankind, thus formed for combination and intercourſe, man himſelf is ſtill the moſt important object of the ſcene; he is the principal object of love, confidence, and eſteem; or the principal object of diſtruſt, deteſtation, and contempt; according as he uſes well, or abuſes, thoſe powers of nature and art, with which he is furniſhed. This forms, relatively to him, the diſtinction of beauty and deformity, of excellence and defect, of merit and demerit, of virtue and vice; and is to his mind the genuine ſource of glory and ſhame, the ſupreme objects of choice or rejection, and the hinge upon which his ambition ſhould turn in all his endeavours to better himſelf, or to avoid the degradation or diſgrace to which he is expoſed.

In nature every ſpecimen of good or of evil is particular, individual, or ſeparate. From certain coincidencies, we combine numbers together, under the predicaments of uſeful or detrimental, of profit or loſs, beauty or deformity, excellence or defect, virtue or vice.

Whether it be proper to range ſubjects of ſuch different denominations under any common predicament, of good on the one hand, or of evil on the other, was warmly diſputed in the antient ſchools of philoſophy, and is a queſtion of mere arrangement, or at moſt of moral diſcernment, not of hiſtorical fact, in the ſtatement of which we are now engaged.

The diſtinction of good and evil originates in the ſenſibility of intelligent beings to the circumſtances in which they are placed, or to the qualities of their own nature. But the application of this diſtinction, and the courſe of life to proceed from it, will de-

pend on the aſſociations men have formed, and even on the epithets of good and evil, they are uſed to beſtow on the ſubjects that occur to their choice. They covet what is reputed profitable, beautiful, or honourable, and ſhun what is reputed pernicious, vile, or diſgraceful.

Man, ſave when he is urged by mere inſtinct, without any knowledge of an end, acts upon his conception of things, and is led in different directions, according as he conceives an object in his imagination, or in his view, to be ranged under either of the oppoſite predicaments we have mentioned. Where wealth is conceived as honourable, poverty as ſhameful, the very deſire of excellence, or ambition itſelf, will take the direction of avarice. Where merit is limited to arbitrary forms of behaviour, virtue itſelf will become a principle of formality or ſuperſtitious obſervance.

Such conceptions may be termed the practical notions of things, and are of ſupreme importance among the conſtituents of a human character, or among the principles upon which the part to be acted through life will depend.

To whatever object we incline, or however we may have claſſed individual things in our conception of what is good or evil, it is proper to remember in this place, that every effort of the mind is alſo individual and particular, relating to an object in ſome particular and individual ſituation. The object is either agreeable and deſired, or diſagreeable and avoided. It is ſecure in poſſeſſion, or precarious and imminent; hence our active diſpoſitions are either the joy of the ſucceſsful, the grief of the diſappointed, the hope of thoſe who have good in proſpect, the fear of thoſe to whom

whom evil is imminent, or who are threatened with the privation of good. Thus, every ſentiment of the feeling mind is particular; and the term, affection, which is neither the joy of the ſucceſsful, the grief of the diſappointed, the hope of thoſe to whom ſucceſs appears probable, nor the fear of thoſe who diſtruſt an event, is a mere abſtraction, no where exiſting in nature; but convenient, like other abſtractions, in the ſtatement of a ſubject, as matter of diſcuſſion or argument.

Whilſt, therefore, we term a diſpoſition, abſtractly conſidered, an affection of mind, we may term the modifications of this affection, exhibited in different circumſtances of the object, the *paſſions*; and theſe being neceſſary, in one degree or other, muſt, upon the ſuppoſition of a juſt affection, and a juſt degree of ſentiment, be acknowledged to be juſt alſo.

The feeling, which we have when our object is in danger, may be neceſſary to excite the proper exertions, and therefore not only natural but eſſential to the propriety of character.

The ſame feeling, when our object is ſecure, would be prepoſterous, and miſlead our conduct. When a mother ſees her child approach to the fire; her affection, which the moment before was ſecure, takes the form of alarm; and the change may be no more than ſufficient to haſten her efforts in behalf of her charge.

So long as the paſſions retain this meaſure of propriety, and are effectual to animate the mind to its proper exertions, it is unneceſſary to obſerve that they are no more than the purpoſe of nature ſeems to require; for, even if a perſon could, without any emotion, ward off the dangers of his country or his friend, we think

think it becoming, that the energy of his affection ſhould be in due proportion with the occaſion on which it is felt. It is no more than the force of a ſpring wound up to give an engine the movement required; and when that force keeps pace with the reſiſtance to be overcome, its variations conſtitute a beauty, in the ſtructure of which it is a part.

If, nevertheleſs, an affection ſhould fruſtrate itſelf in becoming a degree of emotion diſproportioned to the occaſion, ſtill more if the mind ſhould incur a perturbation diſqualifying it for the part that ought to be acted; it is evident that paſſion, in this ſenſe or degree, muſt be reprobated as improper and deſtructive of the very end for which our affections and their different modifications are given.

In dramatic poetry, the occaſional changes of paſſion are diſplayed; and the entertainment would languiſh if any uniform tenor of affection were preſerved through all the varieties of a proſperous or an adverſe fortune. Such a tenor, however, or purpoſe of mind, which, without appearance of agitation or diſturbance, is prompt and effectual in the diſcharge of its office, though unfit for theatric repreſentations, is unqueſtionably the moſt dignified and forcible in the conduct of life. For this reaſon, Epictetus enjoins his pupils not to be acting tragedies with acclamations of joy at one time, with accents of grief, and alas, at another time. And, for this reaſon, the characters of Cato, or of Socrates, were leſs fit for the ſtage than that of Œdipus or Andromache.

Paſſion, in common language, implies ſome exceſs of emotion or perturbation; and it is in this degree or extreme, we are

commonly admoniſhed to beware of its effects. The paſſions were proſcribed in the ſchools of antient philoſophy, not merely upon this ground, of their exceſs, but upon the ground of their incompatibility alſo with the model of perfection, implied under the denomination of wiſdom. This character conſiſted in the choice of virtue, conſidered as the ſole good; and in the rejection of vice, as the ſole evil. A good conſiſting in choice alone, and therefore ever preſent to the wiſe who has made that choice, is an object of uniform ſatisfaction, not of fluctuating emotion to joy from grief, or from hope to fear. The queſtion was not, how far this ſtate of the affections was realized in any inſtance, but how far it was a fit model of perfection, to which the efforts of men ſhould be directed.

Before we conclude this account of our primary ſources of inclination, the modifications of paſſion, of which they are ſuſceptible, and the practical notions or conceptions from which they proceed; it is proper to obſerve, that notwithſtanding any bias originally given to the nature of man, or any diſtinctive bias which the individual may have taken to himſelf in his manner of thinking or acting, he is, nevertheleſs, voluntary in every choice, and is the maſter of his own actions.

It is well known to the conſcious mind, that, however ſtrongly an inſtinct, an affection, or opinion, may inſtigate will in the line of their reſpective directions, and however frequently they may prevail, that yet there is a ſovereign power of choice by which any inclination may be ſuſpended, over-ruled, or prevented of its effects. Thus the ſick patient, though but of moderate reſolution, can deny himſelf the gratifications of appetite, or obey the moſt nauſeous preſcription, when reaſon requires the ſacrifice.

ſacrifice. And the humane can reſiſt the partial dictates of pity, when juſtice requires a more firm and decided exertion of judgement for the good of mankind.

When we would make a mere animal depart from the path of his inſtinct, or refrain from the gratification of his appetite, there muſt be a maſter to apply the force which is neceſſary for this purpoſe: But man is his own maſter; and, in the exerciſe of this ſovereign power of the will, can repeat his efforts, however different from thoſe to which his inſtincts would lead him, until he acquires that inclination, facility, and power of performance, which we term his habit, and which though acquired is ſcarcely to be diſtinguiſhed from an original propenſity.

Such acquiſitions, no doubt, merit a place in the hiſtory of the human mind; but as they are adventitious, or diſtinguiſhable from the original ſources of inclination, they will come more properly to be conſidered hereafter, among the principles of progreſſion in human nature; by which man, in the exerciſe of his power over himſelf, may gain adventitious perfections, or incur adventitious defects, according to the truth of his judgements, and the tenor of his choice.

In poſſeſſion of the ſovereign power over himſelf, the guilty may plead his paſſions in extenuation of his guilt; but paſſion itſelf is an object of moral cenſure, and the paſſionate is conſcious of reſponſibility for the part he may have acted under its influence.

Having thus, under the title of the primary ſources of inclination, mentioned the practical notions of things, and the ſove-

reign power of will; it may be proper to ſtate the particulars which may farther incur under theſe heads, and to conſider more eſpecially the ſources of caprice and adventitious affection or paſſion, of which the examples are ſo frequent in human nature.

SECTION XI.

Of the Sources of Caprice and Adventitious Affection, or Paſſion.

WHERE man is not directed, like a mere animal, by a determinate inſtinct, we have obſerved, that he acts upon the conception he has formed of the objects around him.

Some of his conceptions are taken from experience and obſervation; others from report or the prevailing opinions of other men.

Even of thoſe conceptions that are taken from experience and obſervation, ſome are founded upon the ordinary courſe of things, others upon ſingle events or caſual coincidencies.

On the conceptions which are founded upon the ordinary courſe of things, we may ſafely proceed, truſting that nature, being regular and permanent, will perſevere in the order ſhe has eſtabliſhed. The huſbandman accordingly, having experienced the

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the ſucceſſion of ſeaſons, with their effects, ſecurely ſows that he may reap. And men commonly, having obſerved the condition and temper of their neighbour, frequent or ſhun him, according as they conceive him to be an object of confidence or diſtruſt; and every individual from his infancy, having made actual trial of what is pleaſant or painful, profitable or unprofitable, excellent or vile, may truſt his conceptions, well founded in experience, as a rule of conduct through life.

In deriving an apprehenſion from any real event, we have the authority of fact; but ſingle facts, in a merely fortuitous coincidence of circumſtances, are not to be received as models of what nature would have us to conceive. A place, and the calamity which may have happened in it, a perſon, and the ill news he may have brought, have in fact been preſented together; but by accident merely, and without any connection to juſtify our conceiving them as one. Such conceptions, nevertheleſs, are known to ſeize upon the weak and unwary mind; and, by an aſſociation of things, in their own nature unconnected, make that, which is in itſelf indifferent, an object of fond deſire, or of vehement averſion and horror; of this there are ſtriking examples in what is termed antipathy to particular objects or things.

Individuals, for the moſt part, without any authority of facts, ſingle or multiplied, take their notion of things from report or prevailing opinion. A perſon, ſays the Spectator, "may be talked into any opinion or belief;" and it is undoubtedly true, that the bulk of mankind take up their opinions upon truſt, from what they find commonly received or inculcated in the world. With them, to be often repeated, and again and again conceived, upon the authority of others, has the ſame effect as to be experienced,

rienced, or repeatedly perceived in the ordinary courſe of things. The conception becomes equally habitual in either caſe, and produces the ſame effect.

From this ſource the bulk of the people derive their conceptions on the point of honour, and on the conſtituents of rank or diſtinction, whether birth, fortune, or perſonal qualities. From this ſource they derive their veneration for the religion, and their reſpect for the government of their country.

On theſe ſubjects, we think by contagion with other men; and remain ſubmiſſive to government, or docile to religion, ſo long as the world continues to ſet the example. As we follow the herd, in forming our conceptions of what was reſpectable, ſo we are ready to follow the multitude alſo when ſuch conceptions come to be queſtioned or rejected; and are no leſs vehement reformers of religion, and revolutioniſts in government, when the current of opinion has turned againſt former eſtabliſhments, than we were zealous abettors while that current continued to ſet in a different direction.

To this tendency of minds, to a general conformity of thought, there are no doubt exceptions; not only in the caſe of thoſe who are inclined and qualified to think for themſelves, and to derive their conceptions from a better ſource than that of vulgar opinion; but alſo in the caſe of others leſs fortunate in their character, by whom ſingularity is miſtaken for eminence, and is entertained as an object of ambition: Such men affect to diſſent from the multitude, and work themſelves into ſingular notions of things, taken up at firſt from affectation, and continued through time into habit.

The

The recluſe forms his notions of things upon the model of his own very limited obſervation, or on the ſuggeſtion of repreſentations with which he has occaſion to amuſe his ſolitude. Men of ſpeculation alſo are apt to miſtake their own abſtraction for realities; and ſhould find their talents miſplaced in the midſt of affairs that have reference to circumſtances indefinitely varied and minute. Their merit lies in diſcourſe rather than action; and they may appear with advantage, where general knowledge is to be diſplayed in language, without the trial of practice and application to the production of real effects. Men of ability in conduct are often deficient in diſcourſe; and the eloquent, on the contrary, often deſcend from their eminence, when brought to the teſt of ability in any of the more difficult ſcenes of action.

Men of every deſcription, according to Lord Bacon, have their idols, or peculiar miſapprehenſions, by which they are miſled from the truth. If the recluſe are viſionary, the vulgar are taken up with any triffles that happen to be in common repute. In the ordinary competitions for rank, precedence, or conſideration, they are ſo much occupied with theſe ſuppoſed comparative advantages, that the real and abſolute bleſſings of a happy nature are overlooked; and, in the courſe they purſue, men appear to profit no leſs by the depreſſion of others than they do by their own advancement. Hence the evil paſſions of envy, jealouſy, and malice, the principal ſource or conſtituents of depravation and evil in human life.

Paſſion, once entertained, ſerves to confirm the notion on which it is founded: But, from whatever ſource our conceptions are derived, it is agreeable to the general law of our nature already ſta-

ted, that ſubjects and qualities once conceived together, ſhould alſo recur together, as often as either is preſented to the mind. A thing once conceived as uſeful or pernicious recurs under the ſame predicament; and this diſpoſition to conceive things, as they have been aſſociated, is confirmed by habit; or, where an aſſociation of mere fancy has been repeatedly entertained, may proceed upon habit alone.

In this manner, we not only come to attach qualities to ſubjects, with which they have not any real connection in the ordinary courſe of things; but we alſo attach feeling and emotion of mind to things which are not, in reality, objects of any ſuch emotion or feeling: Inſomuch that as often as the object is preſented, we incur the emotion; or if the emotion is, by any alarm or contagion, excited, we preſently recur to the accuſtomed object. The fearful, when panic-ſtruck, imagine they ſee ſpectres in the dark, or hear the report and claſh of weapons in the air.

Of all the examples which ſerve to evince or illuſtrate this law of aſſociation, language is the moſt familiar and obvious.

The ſigns which compoſe a language, it is well known, are arbitrary, and have been varied indefinitely by the choice or caprice of thoſe who employ them: Yet ſuch is the connection, which uſe has formed between a ſign and its meaning, that the vulgar are apt to believe the words of their own language to be natural expreſſions, and thoſe of any other language to be mere jargon, or a capricious deviation from nature. "*Pain*, *Bread*," ſaid a Frenchman, under the effects of this belief, "Pourquoi *Bread*:

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" Les Francois font les choſes tout ſimple, ils appellent *Pain*, " *Pain*."

Even to thoſe who know the arbitrary inſtitution of ſigns, the ſound of a word preſents its meaning; and to thoſe who are verſed in different languages, any one of many ſounds may preſent the ſame meaning: So that things, however different in nature and in their phyſical effects, as a name is different from the thing named, yet in the mind come to be ſo confounded together, that the preſentment of the one is equivalent to the preſentment of both; and the effects they produce, promiſcuouſly aſcribed to the one or the other. Words are ſaid to provoke; becauſe they are generally employed for this purpoſe; and the ſame meaning may be conveyed without any ſuch effect, when the offenſive terms are omitted. A perſon's aſſertions may be queſtioned, or his civilities declined without any offence; but to ſay that he is impertinent, or lies, would have a different effect.

The aſſociation of names with things may be ſo formed, as to give a habit of paſſing indifferently from the thing to the name, or from the name to the thing, as is the caſe of every perſon in the uſe of his mother tongue: Or, it may be a habit of paſſing only from the name to its meaning, but not the converſe of eaſily paſſing from the meaning to the name, as is the caſe with thoſe who have learned a foreign language imperfectly, and who underſtand what they read or hear in it, but are unable to ſpeak it.

This degree of attainment, in the uſe of a foreign language, like the habit of paſſing from A to B, but not of recurring from

from B to A, is a habit of conceiving the ſenſe, if the word come firſt; but not of being ready with the word, when we would expreſs the ſenſe.

Such facts then, may be collected into a general law of our nature:

That the concommitancy of things or circumſtances, leads to a habit of conceiving them together.

So that any accidental combination of ſubjects may become the object of united conception in us. The preſentment of a part is equivalent to the preſentment of the whole; and we are agitated on the appearance of any one of two or more aſſociated ſubjects, as if the others were actually preſent: Inſomuch that perſons, not on their guard againſt ſuch aſſociations, may be in the power of any accidental or common coincidence for the tenor of their ordinary affections or paſſions; and exhibit examples of a temper or ſpirit in common life, for which nature has laid no other foundation in their conſtitution, beſides this, of their being expoſed to adopt ſuch conceptions of things as lead to ſuch modifications of the temper.

The ingenuous differ from the malicious; the firſt in conceiving mankind as copartners and friends, the other in conceiving them as rivals and enemies: And this difference of apprehenſion hath its intimate ſource in the aſſociation of happineſs, which one may have made with qualities of an abſolute value; another with circumſtances, in reſpect to which, the advantages of men are merely comparative. Inſomuch that elevation of mind, though the

noblest and most powerful affection of human nature, is not always sure of its aim. While the ingenuous attach it to merit, the vain glorious attach it to mere precedence, consideration, and fame.

SECTION

SECTION XII.

The ſame Subject continued.

MAN is formed with a general diſpoſition to affect what he conceives to be good. If his conception be juſt, his affection will be proper and free from caprice or unaccountable paſſions.

But as the conceptions of men are not always taken from the ordinary courſe of things, but ſometimes from ſingular accidents, from contagion and faſhion, from the affectation of ſingularity, or peculiar habits of thinking any way contracted, it frequently happens that the conception miſleads the affection.

Qualities, agreeable or diſagreeable, are aſſociated with things in their own nature indifferent; and things indifferent, under ſuch aſſociations, become objects of capricious deſire or averſion. The phial which contained a naufeous drug being aſſociated with what it once contained, may continue to naufeate after it is empty or clean.

Language, as we obſerved, is the great field of arbitrary aſſociation,

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ciation, in which meaning is connected with ſound ſo firmly that it is almoſt impoſſible to ſeparate or to diſtinguiſh their effects. Words of reproach provoke, and expreſſions of regard conciliate, as a cauſe produces an effect, when moſt firmly connected in the arrangements of nature.

In ſuch inſtances, the terms that oblige or offend have an obliging or an offenſive meaning; and we may eaſily underſtand how a thing, in its own nature indifferent, ſhould produce either pleaſure or diſpleaſure, if it obtrude on the mind the ſubject or occaſion of ſuch emotions. This is an effect of our aſſociating the object of paſſion with a thing that is otherwiſe indifferent. But, as an affection or paſſion may, by contagion or otherwiſe, be repeatedly incurred, together with the preſentment of an object or occaſion, of itſelf, no way fit to excite ſuch emotion; in every ſuch caſe, there ſeems to ariſe a habit of aſſociating together occaſions and paſſions, without the intervention of any thing that can be conſidered as the natural object of the latter. Thus, we ſee perſons terrified where there is no ordinary cauſe of fear; perſons flutter with hope and deſire, when there is no ſuppoſeable good in their proſpect; and ſuch paſſions are known to operate with the greateſt force where the object is altogether nameleſs and unknown. Obſerve the awe with which the devotee is affected, on ſeeing the prieſt perform his ſilent duties at the altar; or on hearing the ſolemn ſounds of devotion in a language which he does not underſtand. Here, if there be any object of veneration, it is ſuch as the mind has fancied to itſelf after the paſſion has been excited: And the perſon is perhaps the more ſtrongly affected, that he is left to gueſs at the cauſe, or that the cauſe is ſuppoſed too myſterious for him to conceive. The paradiſe of fools has ever a reference to ſome nameleſs and inconceivable ſtate of enjoyment.

It may indeed be difficult to underſtand how the habit of attaching affection or paſſion to a mere blank, or privation of any object whatever, could be at all acquired; and it muſt be confeſſed that, if the preſentment of an object, fit to excite the paſſion by aſſociation or otherwiſe, were neceſſary, we never could have acquired any ſuch habit. The exiſtence of an object, indeed may be aſſumed, even while we labour under perfect ignorance of its nature. Thus, we may fancy an occaſion of joy, when we hear the ſhouts of triumph, or an occaſion of terror when we hear the cries of deſpair; and we may take part in the emotions of either kind, on the ſuppoſition of an object, which we magnify the more, that we know not what it is, as well as from ſympathy with thoſe who appear to be greatly affected.

Paſſions are thus communicated from one perſon to another by contagion, without any communication of thought, or knowledge of the cauſe; and the perſon, to whom a paſſion is ſo communicated, may miſtake for the object of it ſome trifling incident or circumſtance, which happens to accompany the emotion.

If the nurſe ſhould ſhriek, or give ſigns of horror, while a rat or a mouſe is paſſing on the floor, her child being infected with terror, may from thenceforward attach ſimilar emotions to the appearance of a ſimilar cauſe.

But, in whatever manner the fact be explained, it cannot be doubted, that ſentiments of great force are produced on frivolous occaſions: As the paſſions of enthuſiaſm or ſuperſtition are attached to forms of expreſſion or geſture, in their own nature indifferent or void of any meaning; the moſt ungovernable feelings of

of horror are incurred on the preſentment of things harmleſs or uſeful, ſuch as the moſt familiar domeſtic animals, or the moſt ordinary and ſalutary ſpecies of food. Of one perſon, we are told, the hair will ſtand on end on the appearance of a cat; of another, that he will ſicken and faint at the ſmell of cheeſe, or the ſight of a particular joint of meat. Such capricious fears or averſions are commonly termed antipathies, and probably muſt have originated in early childhood, or under the effects of diſeaſe; and acquire the force of habit, before the reaſon of the thing could be queſtioned; ſo that they remain through life no leſs a myſtery, to the perſon who is ſubjected to them, than they are to others who behold their effects.

Antipathies, to any particular ſpecies of food, we may ſuppoſe to originate in ſome exceſſive or unſeaſonable uſe of it, that may have made a laſting impreſſion of harm on the animal frame; but, in many inſtances of the ſame kind, there is more of mental perturbation, or panic terror, than of a mere loathing and diſtaſte affecting the organs of ſenſe.

Of ſuch prepoſſeſſions, it is remarkable that they are more frequently of the nature of repugnance or horror, than of fond predilection and joy. This is perhaps agreeable to the general order of nature, under which ſuppoſed evils are more powerful to deter, than ſuppoſed good to allure and conciliate.

What ſeems, among the examples of predilection and fond deſire, to form the neareſt counterpart to the antipathies now ſtated, is the admiration with which titles and badges of honour, the coloured turban in Aſia, the ribband and the ſtar in Europe, the finery of dreſs and of equipage in all the world throughout,

are fondly admired and coveted even by thoſe who ſeem to attach their affection to the external appearance alone.

Examples of ſuch capricious affection, whether inclining to admiration or horror, originated probably in ſome caſual impreſſion, or carry an aſſociation with ſomething by which the mind is ſtrongly affected; and it ſhould ſeem that, in many inſtances, vehement emotion is equivalent to ſtrong conviction of reality in its object: So that, in proportion as ſubjects are ſupoſed to be of great concern, we are raſh in forming our notions, and tenacious of the errors or miſtakes we have committed in reſpect to them.

Upon this foot, we are often precipitant in conceiving the objects, whether of ſuperſtition, enthuſiaſm, or ardent ambition: And ſtrong paſſions of this ſort once entertained ſeem to ſhut up the mind againſt conviction of error. Superſtition precludes inquiry or doubt reſpecting the merit of its object, as ſo many acts of profaneneſs. Ambition rejects every queſtion relating to the eſtimate of elevation or rank, as tending to degradation and meanneſs. You may convince a perſon that he has miſtaken his intereſt, but ſeldom that he has miſtaken his religion or his honour.

It is well known, in the hiſtory of mankind, that ſentiments of devotion, whether genuine or falſe, may be aſſociated with external rites of any deſcription: with rites, in their own nature trivial or indifferent; or with rites, materially adverſe to the ſafety and welfare of mankind.

Rites, in their own nature indifferent or innocent, are mere

arbitrary ſigns of the devotion they are uſed to expreſs; and, being on the foot of eſtabliſhed language, it were abſurd to conteſt their meaning, on the ground of their not having any original connection with the thing ſignified. They may be conſidered as the form, in which the thoughts and affections of men are made known; as ſuch are entitled to regard; and, being ſet apart to expreſs the moſt important of meanings, are to be obſerved with proportional attention and reſpect.

It ſhould ſeem that, when rites, in their phyſical effects, are of a cruel or pernicious tendency, the errors of ſuperſtition, or the principle which can inſpire ſuch cruelties, ſhould be eaſily detected and ſet aſide. There is however reaſon to apprehend the reverſe.

To the mind which is tainted with ſuperſtitious fears, the external rite is the more congenial that it is horrid and cruel. Under the influence of ſuch diſpoſitions, the human ſacrifice appears an adequate tribute of homage to the object of devotion; the charnel houſe, or repoſitory of the dead, a proper place of worſhip; and every circumſtance that contributes to dejection and terror, ſuitable accompanyments of the work that is to be executed.

Such conjectures are confirmed by the practice of ſuperſtitious nations, in many inſtances; and recently, by the accounts we have received of the rites, which are practiſed in ſome of the lately diſcovered iſlands of the Pacific ocean, and among men otherwiſe of mild and innoffenſive diſpoſitions. We find them give way to the affinity of paſſions, in paſſing from the effect of a cruel rite to the feelings of an abject ſuperſtition; in paſſing from the human ſacrifice, and from the ſight of the dead, to the homage they would pay to an angry ſpirit.

It is indeed known, from leſs affecting examples, that we eaſily paſs from an agreeable or diſagreeable ſentiment of one kind, to another of the ſame general tendency; from benevolence and eſteem to hope and joy; or from malice and envy to melancholy, fear, and deſpair.

As ſuperſtition is ſo eaſily formed, ſo tenacious of its errors, and ſo forcible in its effects, it is not ſurpriſing that perſons of a deſigning ambition have foſtered it in themſelves, whilſt they employed it as an engine to work up the minds of other men to their purpoſe. Such adventurers appear to have been ſucceſsful, in proportion as they have ſet reaſon aſide, and ſubſtituted unaccountable caprice inſtead of any juſt or virtuous ſentiment of the mind.

Next to ſuperſtition, or religious enthuſiaſm, the aſſociations of honour, whether imaginary or real, are obſerved to be of the moſt powerful effect in the government of mankind. Here the conception once entertained cannot be violated without incurring a ſenſe of a degradation and meanneſs. Upon this ground, we admire the faſhions of high rank, its titles and badges of honour, its retinue, equipage, or dreſs; and fortune, however powerfully recommended from the conſideration of intereſt, is ſtill more admired and eagerly purſued, as a conſtituent of rank. Even pleaſure owes its principal charm to the diſtinction it gives; and the ſumptuous table of the rich is more flattering to his vanity than it is to his palate.

An aſſociation of glory, with fortitude in the ſuffering of pain, leads the ſavage in triumph through extreme tortures. Such

an aſſociation, having ever been made with atchievements of valour, prepares the ſoldier for actions above the common ſtrength of man. It inſpires the feeble ſex, in the feebleſt race of mankind, to ſeek for death in its moſt terrific and cruel form *. It is effectual, not only in procuring tranſient efforts on great and remarkable occaſions, but fixes in the mind alſo unremitted and ſteady attachment to the objects of ambition, whether aſſumed by prejudice, or ſelected with wiſe diſcernment.

The vulgar have moſt commonly ſtated to themſelves the attainment of power, preferment, or fame, as amounting to elevation and greatneſs; and the paſſion, which reſults from ſuch apprehenſions, is known to be an unremitted, as well as a forcible, motive of action: In frequency it is equal, in force it is ſuperior, to intereſt itſelf. What pity, that examples of its power are more frequent in caſes where it is miſled by falſe aſſociation, than where it proceeds on a diſcernment of real worth, and where it inſpires a juſt elevation of mind! But ſuch is the condition of man, in this firſt period of his progreſs from ignorance to knowledge; during which, his neareſt way to the perception of truth lies through the experience of miſtake and error.

Inequalities of men we may conceive to have been at firſt obſerved in the perſon endowed with different meaſures of ſtrength, whether of body or mind; and may ſuppoſe that perſon to have been eſteemed moſt noble, who poſſeſſed moſt of the qualities which

* The widow in India preſents herſelf to be burnt alive on the pile on which her dead huſband's corps is conſumed.

which every one wiſhed to find in his friend, unſhaken fidelity, generoſity, and courage.

Such we may believe to have been the ſtandard of eſtimation, while perſons remained undiſtinguiſhed by fortune or caſual advantages. But, together with diſtinctions of fortune, amounting to inequalities of condition, perhaps leading to ſuperior attainment or elevation of mind, we may ſuppoſe an aſſociation of ſuperior dignity and worth to have taken place. The effects of wealth, indeed, in procuring attention and ſubmiſſion, keep pace with the effects of merit, in procuring eſteem and affection. The vulgar can ſeldom diſtinguiſh them; and the order of ſociety ſometimes requires that even the moſt diſcerning ſhould not diſpute their effects, or refuſe to fortune the conſideration of rank. It is well if the ordinary race of men retain any ſenſe of perſonal merit, or eſcape the contagion of baſeneſs; which can perceive no ground of elevation but riches, no object of reſpect but proſperity and power.

Whoever has formed his conception of greatneſs amidſt the pageantries of an Aſiatic court, or has ſuffered his mind to be infected with awe, from the operations of power, in actions of cruelty and caprice, will be ready to do homage wherever like ſigns of elevation are held forth to his view.

His veneration will be excited by the contemptuous looks, or, what he may be pleaſed to call, the lofty air of the monarch. He will take his impreſſion of greatneſs even from the robe in which he is dreſſed, from the ſceptre which he holds in his hand, from the crown, or the turban ſtudded with jewels, which reſts on his brow.

In this proſtitution of reſpect, it is paid to the jealous, effeminate,

minate, and cruel tyrant, ſtill more than to the affectionate father, and heroic guardian of his people.

Similar attachments of eſteem and contempt, to the external circumſtances and conditions of men, are obſervable through every rank of life; and, ſuch is the effect of ſuperiority, when admitted upon any pretence, that it exalts whatever is aſſociated with it, and degrades whatever is oppoſed to it.

If rank be founded in riches; wealth, wherever it appears, is conſidered as reputable; and the want of it, in every ſhape, incurs contempt or neglect. Its preſence or abſence warps the judgement in matters of beauty or deformity, of convenience or inconvenience, as well as of merit and demerit *: And the deſire to be what the vulgar admire, often condemns the ambitious to forego every other ſource of enjoyment, in private; to incur perpetual care, ſuffering, and diſtreſs, in order that they may carry, in their public appearances, the eſtabliſhed marks of diſtinction and faſhion. How many ſubmit to be wretched at home, in order to appear happy abroad!

This principle of eſtimation, indeed, whether well or ill applied, is known to be of ſovereign influence in the government of mankind; and it is of the higheſt moment, in the policy of nations, that it ſhould be directed aright. Wherever the ſtandard of elevation and honour is erected, thither will the paſſions of men be pointed, and the moſt ardent efforts of fortitude and magnanimity be made.

Upon

* Tandem res inventa eſt, aurumque repertum;
Quod facile et pulchris et validis demſit honorem.

Upon the whole we may be ſatisfied, that affection and paſſion may be founded in the groundleſs aſſociation of ſubjects and qualities; perhaps alſo, in the mere habit of incurring emotions of a particular kind, under caſual emergencies: And it is, no doubt, of the greateſt moment, to review our habitual conceptions and paſſions; and, above all, to examine the ſubjects to which we attach our feelings of eſteem and contempt.

Such is the force of aſſociation in theſe matters, and ſuch its effect on our conduct, even in oppoſition to conviction and reaſon; that though we are ſenſible our notions are ill-founded, yet we are not releaſed from their influence, until we have worn off one habit by degrees, or in the ſame manner in which it was framed, and until we have ſubſtituted another by a ſimilar practice or uſe in its ſtead.

SECTION

SECTION XIII.

Of Will and Freedom of Choice.

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MAN is conſcious of his power to chuſe among the objects that occur to him; and is conſcious of the conſiderations on which, in any particular inſtance, he has made his choice. He may have inclinations to which he does not give way, and inducements which he is able to withſtand. His perſon may be reſtrained to any particular place; it may be driven by force in any particular direction. He may even feel paſſions of fear or hope, conſtraining him to chuſe what he is willing to avoid; but is conſcious that his being willing or unwilling, in any particular inſtance, can proceed from no cauſe but himſelf: The part he is willing to take is his own; and he alone is accountable for the choice he has made.

The power of choice is a fact of which the mind is conſcious: It is therefore ſupported by the higheſt evidence of which any fact is ſuſceptible. Attempts to ſupport it by argument are nugatory, and attempts to overthrow it by argument are abſurd.

The axiom, that every effect muſt have a cauſe, cannot bring any new light on this ſubject. The axiom itſelf is not better known than the fact, that will is free, and truths are certainly conſiſtent one with the other. The conſciouſneſs of freedom hath been termed a deceitful feeling; but why not the axiom, that every effect muſt have a cauſe, a deception alſo? If we ſay the axiom is a neceſſary truth; it may be ſo when well underſtood. Effect is correlative to cauſe, and they are inſeparable; but there may be exiſtence without any cauſe external to itſelf, as there may be will without any cauſe but the mind that is willing.

Every rational action, indeed, has a motive; for the very purpoſe which conſtitutes rationality is itſelf a motive: But, may not the mind determine itſelf; and, amidſt the conſiderations or objects which are preſented to its choice, be the cauſe of its own determination? If there be always a conſideration upon which minds are willing or unwilling, it were abſurd, nevertheleſs, to conſider volition as an act of neceſſity, not of choice. Such ſubſtitutions of mechanical imagery, in this, as in many other inſtances, ſerve to miſlead our conception. Under ſuch images, the mind, in the midſt of its motives, is conceived as a tennis ball impelled at once in many directions, while it can move but in one direction. Will is the direction of mind, and is always ſuch as it receives from ſome one of its motives. Here the analogy, though far from being perfect, is ſuppoſed to convey the idea of neceſſity from matter to mind: For what know we elſe of neceſſity, it is ſaid, but that an effect ever follows its cauſe?

In this caſe, however, we endeavour to confound matters which are far from being alike. The effect on the tennis ball is

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not conformable to any one impreſſion, but is a compound of all. Did the body, which is ſtruck by oppoſite forces, take account of their number, direction, and power, and, upon a fair eſtimate of that which was ſtrongeſt, chuſe to move in the direction of ſome determinate force, the analogy would be complete; but the inference to be drawn upon this ſuppoſition, inſtead of extending neceſſity to mind, would communicate freedom to matter.

The conſideration that infinite power muſt have preordained the operations of will, and that theſe operations therefore cannot be free, is an argument taken by conjecture from a collateral ſubject, to overthrow a fact of which we are conſcious.

The implication of univerſal preſcience in the perfect intelligence of God, from which we would infer, that every future event is no leſs certainly future, than that every paſt event is certainly paſt, is an argument of the ſame kind. We would reject a fact that is perfectly within our cognizance, on the credit of an argument taken from a ſubject that is beyond our reach. We know not the nature of divine omniſcience; and, if the Almighty hath opened a ſource of contingence in nature, we may ſuppoſe that contingence itſelf is a perfection in his works. Who can doubt that intelligence is a quality of the higheſt order in the ſcale of created being; and that diſcernment and freedom of choice are eſſential to intelligent beings.

The knowledge which we aſcribe to the Author of nature comprehends, no doubt, whatever may reſult from the ſource of contingence, which he has opened in the freedom of his intelligent

gent creatures, and his almighty providence is ſufficient to controul the effects of ſuch freedom. He foreſees, we conceive, that abſolute evil under ſuch government cannot befal the univerſe: for whatever be the contingent effect of freedom, it is ever ſuſceptible of remedy and it is ever good that intelligent beings ſhould be free.

The decrees of almighty power are not leſs eternal in being made at any one point of duration in preference to another. The date of their exiſtence is ever preſent. Such is the eternal *Now*, to which we ſometimes ſtrive, but perhaps in vain, to elevate our thoughts on this ſubject.

The conſequence which the fataliſt would draw from the ſuppoſed neceſſity of human action, is likewiſe abſurd. The neceſſity conſiſts in the relation of motive and will. Every choice, no doubt, proceeds on a motive; for the purpoſe, which is ſuppoſed in every act of intelligence, is itſelf a motive: But how abſurd for the fataliſt to plead that he is not accountable for having committed a bad action; under pretence that his intention itſelf, which was the motive or cauſe of ſuch action, was bad! It is evident that the inference ſhould be, not impunity to the perſon who acts from a bad motive, but the expedience of employing ſome counter motive to reſtrain the bad one: And this preciſely is the nature of puniſhment, whether operating by neceſſity or choice.

After all, in treating of the human will, the names of liberty and neceſſity may be diſputed; but notorious facts are foundation enough, upon which we may ſafely erect the fabric of moral ſcience, ſo far as it is of any importance to mankind.

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Every perſon knows that, if he is detained or drawn along by force, he has no choice, and is not reſponſible for the conſequences: That, if a fact be made evident to him, he has no choice, and muſt know or believe it to be true; all he can do is to examine the evidence, and abide by the effects. But if he be offered a price for his houſe, though more than the value, he has a choice, and may reject or accept of the offer at pleaſure. In the former inſtances, he was conſtrained by force, or by evidence, and is not accountable: But in this he acts for himſelf, and may be to blame. If he be in his ſenſes, indeed, he will have a reaſon for what he does; but ſtill he is himſelf the perſon who acts, and who by his choice may incur the higheſt meaſures of cenſure; as, by miſtaking the truth, he may incur the imputation of weakneſs and folly: And, on theſe conſiderations reſt the foundations of moral wiſdom and intellectual induſtry in the ſearch of truth, in whatever manner we apply the terms of liberty or neceſſity to one or the other.

SECTION XIV.

Of the Nature and Origin of Moral Science.

PHYSICAL Science has been conſidered as an article in the hiſtory of mind proceeding from the obſervation of particulars; leading, by means of abſtraction and generalization, to a comprehenſive view of the ſyſtem or actual ſtate of things; and terminating in the completion of all that man is able to attain, in the exerciſe of what are termed his cognitive powers.

The conſideration of moral ſcience, no leſs an article in the hiſtory of mind, has been reſerved for this place, that it might follow the ſtatement of will, and other functions of what has been termed the power active.

This branch of ſcience relates to human nature, ſtated under the aſpect already mentioned, of its ſpecific excellence and defect, and regards the diſtinction of good and evil.

Other diſtinctions intereſt the curioſity of men; but on the diſtinction

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diſtinction of good and evil, are founded the oppoſite conditions of happineſs and miſery. Men are warned of its importance in every inſtance of enjoyment or ſuffering, of honour or diſhonour, of ſatisfaction and peace of mind, or remorſe of conſcience, ſelf-reprobation, and ſhame.

As men are, to one another, mutually the moſt important objects of the ſcene in which they are placed, and the characters of good and evil are equally obvious to their obſervation of one another, as in the conſciouſneſs which every one has of himſelf; varieties, which they exhibit, in this reſpect, have a proportional ſway over the emotions and paſſions incident to the human heart; their effects appear in the ſentiments of approbation or diſapprobation; eſteem or contempt, veneration and love; or, indignation, deteſtation, and ſcorn, of which parties, in the commerce of life, by their oppoſite characters, are the occaſion and the objects.

The occaſions on which men are ſo affected with ſentiments of complacency or reprobation, command their attention beyond any other conſideration in nature; inſomuch that pictures of manners are, of all other ſubjects, the moſt intereſting to the human mind. Hence the principal charm of hiſtory, on which the actions and characters of men are detailed; of poetry, in which repreſentations, fictitious or real, are made; even of moral diſcourſe, when the ſubjects of admonition, injunction, and precept are, by a juſt recommendation, brought home to the feelings of eſteem or contempt.

With ſuch delineations of manners, the great critic would inſtruct his pupils to captivate the ears, even of the multitude.

Reſpicere exemplar vitæ, morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et vivas hinc ducere voces:
Interdum ſpecioſa locis, morataque recte
Fabula, nullius Veneris, ſine pondere et arte,
Valdius oblectat populum, meliuſque moratur,
Quam verſus inopes rerum nugæque canoræ.

HOR. DE ARTE POETICA, v. 317.

As there never was a nation ſo ſtupid as not to obſerve the firſt ſimple laws of motion, gravitation, and elaſticity; nor ſo artleſs as not to apply theſe laws to the ordinary purpoſes of human life; ſo there never was a people who did not perceive and apply the diſtinctions of right and wrong, in the moſt decided expreſſions of eſteem or contempt, of applauſe and cenſure. How they may have proceeded from the firſt and moſt limited obſervations of a phyſical law, which is the origin of ſcience in one of its branches; or, from the apprehenſion of a moral law, on which this other branch of ſcience is founded; to a more enlarged, luminous, and comprehenſive ſyſtem of either kind, we may, under the title of man's purſuits and attainments, have occaſion to ſtate as a part in the hiſtory of his progreſſive nature. In the mean time, we may endeavour to collect the firſt canons of reaſon, with reſpect to the conduct of moral enquiries, as we did thoſe which relate to the inveſtigation of phyſical laws, or the general arrangement of facts.

Sciences of theſe different claſſes agree in the general condition of their being a knowledge of the laws of nature, and of their applications: But the laws of nature may be differently underſtood, and differently applied. A phyſical law of nature is a general ſtate of what is uniform or common in the order of things, and

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is addreſſed to the powers of perception and ſagacity. A moral law of nature is equally general, though an expreſſion not of a fact, but of what is good; and is addreſſed to the powers of eſtimation and choice.

Reſpecting the ſubjects of moral law, whatever may be their actual condition, the law does not ſtate what is, but enjoins what ought to be done or avoided.

Phyſical law is applied to the formation of theory, or the explanation of phenomena; and is the foundation of power. Moral law is applied to determine the choice of voluntary agents, and ſuggeſt the purpoſe to which their power is or ought to be employed.

As, in phyſical ſcience, our object is to inveſtigate and comprehend the actual ſtate of things, no mere hypotheſis or ſuppoſition can be admitted among the laws of nature: And, in moral ſcience, our object being to determine a choice of what is beſt, no mere fact can be adduced to preclude our endeavours to obtain, in any ſubject, what is better than its actual ſtate.

Among facts or realities, therefore, moral eſtimation being directed to what is good, independent of the fact, the firſt, or the fundamental law of morality, relating to man, independent of what men actually are, muſt be an expreſſion of the greateſt good to which human nature is competent. It is held forth as the principal object of cultivation and ſtudy. And, if there ſhould be a greater good than that which is ſo held forth, the foundation of ſcience we have laid is defective, and the efforts of cultivation and ſtudy are miſplaced.

To ſubſtitute theory, even of mind, for moral ſcience would be an error and an abuſe. This abuſe, indeed, has been incurred by many, who take the diſtinction of phyſical and moral ſcience from the ſubjects to which they relate, not from the objects to which they are directed. Phyſical ſcience they ſuppoſe to be a knowledge of ſubjects material; moral ſcience, a knowledge of mind, or of ſubjects intellectual: And they accordingly place theoretical ſpeculation on the ſubject of mind, among the diſcuſſions of moral philoſophy. In their apprehenſion, moral approbation and diſapprobation are mere phenomena to be explained; and, in ſuch explanations their ſcience of morals actually terminates. The phenomena of moral approbation have been ſuppoſed no more than a diverſified appearance of the conſideration that is paid to private intereſt, to public utility, to the reaſon of things; or they have been ſuppoſed to reſult from the ſympathy of one man with another.

But if moral ſentiment could be thus explained into any thing different from itſelf, whether intereſt, utility, reaſon or ſympathy, this could amount to no more than theory. And it were difficult to ſay to what effect knowledge is improved, by reſolving a firſt act of the mind into a ſecond, no way better known than the firſt. The effect of a theory ſo applied, for the moſt part, has been to render the diſtinction of good and evil more faint than it commonly appears under the ordinary expreſſions of eſteem and love, or of indignation and ſcorn.

Whatever we ſubſtitute for an object of moral eſtimation, is thereby ſet up as an object of predilection and cultivation. If we ſubſtitute utility or profit, for the ſtandard of moral good, it

muſt follow, that to be *virtuous* and *intereſted*, are ſynonymous terms. Or if, for virtue, we ſubſtitute any thing that is of a mean nature, as when we ſubſtitute pride for elevation of mind, it is evident that we do not ſo much miſlead the efforts of men, as ſtifle the very principle, from which they are bent on the improvement of their own nature. If ſympathy is admitted as the principle of moral eſtimation, it is evident that we admit, as a ſtandard of good, what may itſelf, on occaſion, be erroneous and evil, or what ought not to be eſteemed beyond where it is juſt and proper; limits which preſuppoſe that that there is a prior ſtandard of moral eſtimation, by which even the rectitude of ſympathy itſelf is to be judged.

This ſtandard, it is the object of moral philoſophy to aſcertain, and to apply, in eſtimating the reaſon of different men, their ſympathies and their antipathies, the good or the evil they incur in every act of the mind, and in every inſtance throughout the conduct of life.

To a being ſuſceptible of happineſs or miſery, the laws of nature, according to which theſe oppoſite conditions are diſpenſed, cannot have eſcaped obſervation. The inveſtigation and application of them, accordingly, whether well or ill performed, may be conſidered as an operation eſſential to the intelligent nature of man; and is that branch in the hiſtory of the human mind which we term Moral Philoſophy.

SECTION

SECTION XV.

Of the Sources of Religion among Mankind.

AMONG the works in which man exhibits a variety of invention unknown in any other ſpecies of animal, ſome were obſerved which have not any reference to his ordinary wants, nor any tendency to compleat his accommodations. Such are edifices conſtructed neither for his lodgement nor for his defence; temples, and places of worſhip, in which he gives ſigns of intercourſe with ſome powers inviſible, or ſhews the apprehenſion of a preſence greatly ſuperior to that of his fellow creatures.

The perception of intelligent power operating in nature is familiar, and a principal diſtinction in the deſcription of man. No tribe is ſo brutiſh, ſays Cicero, as not to know that there is a God, although they may not know what conception to form of his character *.

* Nulla gens tam fera, quæ non ſciat deum habendum eſſe, quamvis ignoret qualem habere deceat.

De Natura Deorum.

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On this firſt general point, therefore, mankind do not appear to need information.

Among the nations of the antient world, the greater part, if not the whole, had their creed or ſyſtem of theology, an order of prieſthood, a form of worſhip, and altars erected to the known or unknown God. In the new world, even where ſuch eſtabliſhments were wanting, nations did not incur the charge of brutality mentioned by Cicero: For, even amongſt them, references to the intelligent power that governs the world were familiarly made or received.

What then, may we aſk, is the origin of this apprehenſion? and whether does it conduct the human mind in the progreſs of information, and in the maturity of its conceptions? Does man perceive in the aſpect and operations of nature, the preſence and meaning of intelligent power, as he perceives in the aſpect and works of his fellow-creatures, a mind like his own, furniſhed with ſimilar faculties and correſponding intentions?

To theſe queſtions we may anſwer, That, if the apprehenſion of a final cauſe or deſign implies the perception of intelligence, if deſign be the incommunicable attribute of mind, and if there be in the nature of things any intimation of final cauſe or deſign, thither we may refer the firſt apprehenſion of intelligent power in the ſyſtem of nature.

It may be difficult to fix the point from which this intimation at firſt was given. In the rudeſt, or moſt ſimple ſtate of the human ſpecies, it may have occurred from the fitneſs of parts in the conſtruction of ſubjects the moſt familiar, or from great and alarming

larming occaſions that rouſed the mind to apprehend the intention of ſome power to interrupt, or break in upon the ordinary courſe of things.

It is, however, probable, that the apprehenſion of a beneficent deſign in nature had its ſource in ſome inſtance that is really fitted to juſtify ſuch a conception: As in the exquiſite conſtruction and obvious deſign which appear in the fabric of animal organs. Theſe, in the caſe of every animal, are accompanied with an inſtinctive direction to the uſe of them. The chick, almoſt as ſoon as he has eſcaped from the ſhell, runs at his food, and picks with the bill. The quadruped, when he drops from the dam, ſteps with his feet upon the ground, and gropes for the dug, from which he is to derive his nouriſhment. This inſtinctive direction, when combined with intelligence in the nature of man, amounts to a perception that the organ was made for the purpoſe to which it is applied. Who ever doubted that the eye was made to ſee, the ear to hear, the mouth to receive, and the teeth to grind his food; that the foot was made to ſtep on the ground; the hand to graſp, or enable him to ſeize and apply things proper for his uſe.

This perception of deſign in nature ſtill accompanies the human mind in its views, whether contracted or enlarged, whether limited to the organization of a ſingle animal or plant, or reaching to the combination of parts indefinitely multiplied in the terreſtrial or ſolar ſyſtems. The part bears impreſſions of deſign, which continues to be perceived with increaſing evidence in the conſtruction of the whole.

This fabric of nature, ſo fitly organized in the frame of every individual

individual is organized alſo in the aſſemblage of many individuals into one ſyſtem, whether of the earth which they inhabit, or of the ſun and planets of which this earth itſelf is but a part: So that the ſame character of deſign, which the moſt ignorant may read in the firſt aſpect of things that moſt nearly concerns them, the learned may read alſo throughout the whole ſyſtem or volume of nature.

Whether this leſſon, to be taken from the aſpect of things, be obvious to every beholder, or only to a few of ſuperior diſcernment, and from them communicable and eaſily received by the ordinary claſs of men, we may not be able to determine, and is not of moment to our preſent argument, in accounting for religion as the gift of nature, to every nation and to every age. For, in every nation, and in every age, the few may be found who are fit to receive and communicate to others the apprehenſion of deſign in the works of God.

By this magnificent piece of inſtruction, man is finally let into the ſecret of his own deſtination; and is enabled to become a conſcious and a willing inſtrument in the hand of his Maker for the completion of his work.

Among the foundations, on which the difference of right and wrong is ſuppoſed to reſt, the will of God, commanding the one, and forbidding the other, is by ſome aſſumed as the only real ground of diſtinction.

The will of God is, no doubt, of ſupreme authority; and where that is known, we need not recur to any other: But, it has pleaſed him that his will, at leaſt in the firſt intimation of it, ſhould

ſhould be declared by means of the order eſtabliſhed in his works. And in our conduct of life, the oppoſite natures of right and wrong are our ſafeſt guides, in every particular inſtance, to the performance of what the will of God has required. It is in ſearch of a model, and of a patron of what is previouſly known to be right, that we arrive at our beſt and our higheſt conceptions of the Supreme Being.

This conception, if we take it at a medium of what nations in general have poſſeſſed, is to be valued, rather as indicating a capacity of farther attainment, than as a bleſſing already compleat. It is, like other articles in the progreſſive and variable nature of man, a foundation on which he may build; a germ which, in the progreſs of his nature, may wax to indefinite magnitude and ſtrength; or, if we may ſtill vary the image, it may be conſidered as one of the rude materials on which he himſelf is to exert his talent for art and improvement.

It is ſo much the diſpoſition of man to operate on his firſt materials, whether by extending or improving them, or by ſtraining them to the model of ſome favourite prepoſſeſſion, affection or paſſion; that it is probable we may no where find the conception of God in the ſame form which it bore when firſt collected from the appearance of things in the world.

As the wiſe and the happy may have raiſed and enlarged their conception of this object, the brutiſh and the depraved may have corrupted and ſunk it far below the level even of ordinary reaſon.

The Author of nature, in creating, we may obſerve, appears diſpoſed to a limited variety of kinds and ſpecies, but deſcends

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to indefinite multiplicity and diſcrimination of individuals. Many individuals conſtitute but one ſpecies, and many ſpecies but one genus or kind. The ſyſtem of nature itſelf is one, conſiſting of many orders and claſſes of being; and a deſign which is apparent in every part, reſults in a deſign that is common to the whole. Neither in the neceſſity of an efficient cauſe, nor in any appearance of a divided purpoſe, is there any reaſon to apprehend a plurality of gods: Yet ſo little are the bulk of mankind qualified to purſue a ſeries of obſervation and thought, without any mixture of error, that Polytheiſm has been more frequent than Theiſm; or the belief of many gods, more frequent than the belief of one ſupreme intelligent power. And nations have made up a liſt of their gods upon a model, taken from the human race, numerous and diſtinguiſhable by ſex and age, as well as by diſpoſition and rank.

Theſe are the great and prevailing errors of the human mind, in purſuing its firſt apprehenſion of intelligent power, ſuppoſed to exiſt in the conduct of nature.

It is in correcting ſuch errors, and in obſerving the order of Providence, that the human mind is likely to advance in that part of its progreſs which relates to this ſubject: And which, indeed, is the completion of all the advantages which man is enabled to obtain in the progreſs of his intellectual faculties.

Although polytheiſm favours of a prepoſſeſſion which man has taken from the analogy of his own nature, and from the diverſity of character in the multitude of men; yet, it is probable, that the plurality of Gods did not originate in the conception of any ſingle perſon, but was an aggregate of the conceptions which different men had formed upon the ſuggeſtion of their own ſituations,

tuations, and the peculiar circumſtances in which they were placed.

In every nation or tribe, the providence of God was ſuppoſed to take its character from the circumſtances in which it was employed. In maritime ſituations, the deity was conceived as monarch of the ſea, and director of ſtorms. Within land, he was conceived as the patron of huſbandmen and of ſhepherds, the ruler of ſeaſons, and the power on which man muſt depend for the increaſe of his herds, and for the returns of his harveſt.

In no inſtance, perhaps, did the people of any one deſcription or determinate manner of life, originally conceive more than one God: But the accounts of what different nations believed, when collated together, ſeemed to make up a catalogue of ſeparate deities; and what every nation apart intended for one, when reports were accumulated from different quarters, was miſtaken for many.

The ſpirit with which theſe reports of a God acknowledged in one nation, different from the God who was acknowledged in another, were mutually received by their reſpective votaries, was various in different inſtances. In ſome inſtances, the pretenſions of one deity were ſuppoſed to be conſiſtent with thoſe of another, and the Gods reconcileable. Upon this ſuppoſition, every nation worſhipped its own, without any ſuppoſed diſparagement to the God of its neighbour, and without animoſity to his worſhippers.

In other inſtances, pretenſions were conſidered as inconſiſtent; deities were ſtated as rival powers; and nations waged continual war under the banners of their reſpective gods.

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It has become a proverbial expreſſion, that the abuſe of the beſt things becomes the worſt; and this, no doubt, has been verified in the abuſe of religion. Though in the proper uſe of it, the higheſt and the moſt beneficial attainment of human nature, in the abuſe, it has become the ſource of great evil; a bar to knowledge and freedom of thought; a ſource of rancour, malice, revenge, and cruelty, beyond any other principle of depravation incident to the mind of man.

Polytheiſm, perhaps, was innocent, compared to the otherwiſe falſe apprehenſion of a deity to be gratified with acts of debaſement and horror, or the obſervance of rites, not only frivolous, but pernicious to mankind.

Where the God to be ſerved is conceived to be an evil ſpirit, offended by trivial neglects, and appeaſed by as trivial performances, he is worſhipped more from fear and diſtruſt, than from confidence and love: Not with the fear that reſults from the conſciouſneſs of guilt, and is ſo far conformable to the dictates of reaſon; but a fear that reſults from the uncertainty of what man has to expect from a capricious power, having an object to purſue for himſelf at the expence of his creatures.

The vulgar, accordingly, in barbarous ages, apprehended the God to whom their worſhip was addreſſed as a jealous tyrant, againſt whoſe exaction of ſervices, and caprice of will, they had no ſecurity in purſuing any courſe of life even the moſt fair and inoffenſive which reaſon can ſuggeſt. When calamity befel them they had recourſe to divination to diſcover the cauſe; and ſeemed to believe, that the rod of divine anger was ever lifted

lifted on high and the application of it to be deprecated by adulation, voluntary penance, and ſacrifice.

Even the learned are not always qualified to correct theſe errors, or rightly to interpret the ſigns of wiſdom, goodneſs and juſtice, which are held forth in the government of the world. Inſomuch that the reality of any ſuch meaning, in the ſyſtem of nature, has been conteſted with much ingenuity, and appearance of argument, of which we ſhall conſider the foundation in the following ſection.

SECTION XVI.

Of the Origin of Evil.

——What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raiſe and ſupport;
That, to the height of this great argument,
I may aſſert eternal Providence;
And juſtify the ways of God to men.

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THIS is the great ſtumbling block which the Atheiſt oppoſes to the entrance of religion, and which the Theiſt ever ſtrives to remove.

We are told, by thoſe who attempt this arduous taſk, that the order of nature requires the obſervance of general laws, even where the effect, in particular inſtances, may be hurtful; and that

that the complaints of evil in human life ariſe merely from the ſhocks of private intereſt with univerſal convenience.

However ſatisfactory this account of the matter may be to thoſe who are familiar with the conceptions of univerſal order or general good, the bulk of mankind look no farther than to the ground of their own complaints; and hold that to be evil in nature by which man is aggrieved. Their complaints may be more effectually ſilenced, if it be made to appear, that this order of things is ſuited to the nature of man, and of every created intelligence; and therefore required in a ſyſtem, of which intelligent being is the capital form or higheſt claſs of exiſtence.

On the foot of fair inquiry, which is never more proper than in treating ſuch important queſtions, we are to ſtate the ſubject, and then to conſider whether there be enough, in the defects of man's condition and frame, to refute the firſt ſuggeſtions of an exiſting power, ſupremely beneficent as well as wiſe.

The works of nature are indefinitely varied; inſomuch, that variety itſelf appears to be an object in the formation of them.

Throughout the kingdom of mineral, vegetable, and animal, there is a continual diverſity of kind, ſpecies, and individual: Yet, throughout the whole of every kingdom, there runs a certain analogy; there is a diſtribution of qualities, a chain of connection and mutual ſubſerviency, which renders the veſtige of intelligent power the more evident, that parts are ſo various, while they are ſo happily ranged and connected.

Parts

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Parts that conſtitute the ſyſtem of nature, like the ſtones of an arch, ſupport and are ſupported; but their beauty is not of the quieſcent kind. The principles of agitation and of life combine their effects in conſtituting an order of things, which is at once fleeting and permanent. The powers of vegetation and animal life come in aid of mechanical principles; the whole is alive and in action: The ſcene is perpetually changing; but, in its changes, exhibits an order more ſtriking than could be made to ariſe from the mere poſition or deſcription of any forms entirely at reſt.

Man, with his intellectual powers, placed at the top of this terreſtrial ſcale, like the key-ſtone of the arch, completes the ſyſtem. His veſtige on the earth is marked with continual efforts of peculiar deſign, to which the form which material ſubjects had previouſly aſſumed, is ever made to give way. His favourite plants and animals are propagated. Whatever is noxious or unſerviceable to him, his rivals and his enemies, are ſuppreſſed. The ſuperfluous foreſt is cleared; marſhes are drained; or ways are opened for ſtagnating waters to reach the ſea. His property is ſet apart: His field is cultivated: Cities are built: He himſelf, or the productions of his art, every where crowd on the view, and become the principal object of the ſcene. He is even met on the trackleſs ocean, and employs the currents of air and of water to aid him in the movements which he is diſpoſed to perform.

The genius of variation, which is ſo eminent in comparing different ſpecies of being together, is carried into the economy with which the ſame ſpecies, in reſpect to the individuals that compoſe it, is continually changing; and the generations that *were* and *are*, haſten to make way for thoſe which are to come.

In this wonderful ſcene, the power that works was originally creative, and is equally ſo in every ſucceſſive period of time. While the things that were are paſſing away, things that were not are brought into being. Not only individuals are made to ſucceed one another, but new forms and varieties of aſpect and ſtature, are made to ſucceed in the ſame individual. From the firſt germ of every vegetable, from the embryo in every animal, there is a progreſs to the maturity of its kind; and from thence a decline and continual approach to its diſſolution.

This progreſs affects man in his intellectual and moral nature, no leſs than in his growth, or in his approach to the perfect ſtate, and the decline of his vegetative and animal powers. He ſets out without knowledge, or any of its benefits, in forming his conception of things, or in directing his active propenſities. His faculties and his attainments are equally progreſſive. His knowledge, preceded by ignorance, originates in the mere capacity of obſervation and thought. He has to ſtruggle through the firſt miſtaken appearances of things, by experience and continued obſervation to the diſcovery of truth. Knowledge is the ſap which nature has ſupplied to nouriſh the growing mind: Its faculties, in the mean time, take ſolidity and ſtrength from the exerciſe they find in collecting this nouriſhment.

Labour is to man a ſource of enjoyment, and to the faculties with which he is furniſhed a principal means of improvement. Arts communicate, by information and example, from the maſter to his pupil, and from a paſſing generation to that which ſucceeds it; ſo that the progreſs of the human ſpecies is not, like that of other animals, limited to the individual or to the age; but communicated from one to another, and continued from age to age.

As

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As exerciſe is the ſchool of intelligent power, man is every where ſurrounded with occaſions that require its exertion. He finds himſelf beſet with inconveniences, which he deſires to remove; remote from advantages which he deſires to gain; and ſubjected to much difficulty, danger, diſappointment, and ſorrow, in his attempts to remove the one, or to obtain the other. Every material preſented to him, in its natural ſtate, is rude, and unfit for his uſe. The ſpontaneous produce of the ſoil is no where fit to maintain him. Poiſon and food are blended together in the productions of the earth. The noxious and the ſalutary are to be diſtinguiſhed and ſeparated with anxious care. He is made deſirous of knowledge; but the ſubject of his inquiries is concealed from him under a variety of perplexing appearances. He is diſpoſed to ſociety; but diſtreſſed with the evils to which he finds it expoſed. When his object is at a diſtance, he is flattered with hope, that when he ſhall have gained it, his labours will be at an end: But on his approach to the ſuppoſed end of his wiſhes, he finds that his hope was deceitful, that he muſt engage in ſome other purſuit, and that his labours are ſtill to be renewed. The very organs that render him ſuſceptible of pleaſure expoſe him alſo to an overbalance of pain.

Theſe particulars in the lot of man are to him matters of complaint, and numbered with the evils that darken his apprehenſion relating to the providence of God: But to an indifferent ſpectator, who compares the actor with the ſcene in which he is placed, or the pupil with the ſchool to which he is ſent, the whole muſt appear to be wiſely and beneficently deviſed. It muſt appear, that a lot, compoſed of objects to be deſired and ſhunned, is fitted to an active being, as the air is fitted to the wing of the bird,

the water to the fin of the fiſh, and its place in the ſyſtem of nature is fitted to the reſpective ſtructure and organization of every ſpecies, in the ſeveral diviſions of the animal kingdom.

Man, though a rational ſoul, is endowed with animal organs, that he may perceive and obſerve the ſyſtem of nature around him. The wants and neceſſities of his animal frame are the earlieſt ſpurs to his active exertion. His intelligent faculties are tried and whetted in purſuing appearance to reality, which the firſt aſpect of things often ſerves to diſguiſe. Having the talents of an artiſt, his ſupply is very properly made to conſiſt in rude materials, not in finiſhed productions, that would ſupercede the uſe of his faculties.

Among the ſignals which are held forth to warn him of what he ought to ſhun, or direct him to what he ought to chuſe, pain is not leſs inſtructive than pleaſure; and the hand which inflicts the one is not leſs beneficent than that which beſtows the other. He is deſtined to learn, and his lot muſt have the ſeverities of a ſchool, not the pampering of ſenſuality and ſloth. The beſt mariners are formed in boiſterous ſeas; difficulty and danger are fit occaſions for the exerciſe and attainment of ability and courage.

To an obſerver, who ſees the nature and deſtination of man in this point of view, the final cauſe will be obvious: And an evidence of the wiſdom and goodneſs of Providence will ariſe from thoſe very grounds on which the atheiſt is pleaſed to diſpute their reality: Proofs of goodneſs in the Author of nature may be collected from the very wants to which man is born; from the labour he is bound to perform; the difficulties he is required to ſurmount;

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the dangers he has to encounter; and from the delays or diſappointments that prolong or renew his labours, and call for a continued repetition of his toils.

We may not perceive the ſpecial neceſſity of painful and adverſe circumſtances in any particular inſtance; but that ſuch ſhould be interſperſed in the lot of man, and his experience chequered with the agreeable effects of that wiſdom, which he ought to cultivate, mixed with the contrary effects of folly, which he ought to correct, is highly expedient, and well ſuited to his nature.

The activity of life, in the mean time, is to him not only the ſchool of wiſdom and of virtue, but the conſtituent alſo of pleaſure and of preſent enjoyment.

If we attempt to conceive ſuch a ſcene as the atheiſt contends would be required to evince the wiſdom and goodneſs of God; a ſcene in which every deſire were at once gratified without delay, difficulty or trouble; it is evident, that on ſuch ſuppoſition the end of every active purſuit would be anticipated, exertion would be prevented, every faculty remain unemployed, and mind itſelf no more than a conſciouſneſs of languor, under an oppreſſion of wearineſs, ſuch as ſatiety and continued inoccupation are known to produce.

On this ſuppoſition all the active powers which diſtinguiſh human nature would be ſuperfluous, and only ſerve to diſturb his peace, or to ſour the taſte of thoſe inferiour pleaſures which appear to be conſiſtent with indolence and ſloth.

Such a ſcene were ill ſuited to this active and aſpiring being, for

for whom the good to be gained is not an exemption from labour, but the improvement of his intellectual faculties, and an approach to the reſemblance of that being whoſe good is beneficence and wiſdom, and who kindly communicates a reliſh of the ſame bleſſings to the mind of man, whoſe lot we are now conſidering; and who is enabled to collect the exiſtence of an Author ſupremely wiſe and beneficent from the beautiful order which is eſtabliſhed in his works.

Such then being the character of man's nature, reſpecting his diſpoſition to act, his faculties, and his preferable enjoyments; the propriety, for his reception, or even the neceſſity of a world governed by fixed laws is obvious.

If the laws are multiplied and combine their effects to a degree of intricacy; his penetration is exerciſed in obſerving the conjuncture that is formed by their joint operations; his ſagacity in forecaſting the reſult; and his art in accommodating his meaſures to the end he would gain. If the laws of nature were not fixed, all theſe faculties were given in vain. If there were not any fixed connection of cauſe and effect, the wiſe could have no foreſight, nor practiſe any means for the attainment of an end.

So that eſtabliſhed order is not more conſonant to the nature of man, than it is in general to all intellectual being. It is the proper work of God, the proper ſtudy of man, the foundation of ſkill, wiſdom, and art.

If any one, therefore, ſhall ſay, that the univerſe is an object too vaſt for him to conceive; that he knows not what may or may not accommodate ſuch an object; he may nevertheleſs be qualified to per-

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ceive, that an eſtabliſhed courſe of things, agreeable to fixed and determinate laws, is a proper ſcene for the reception of intelligent beings; that ſuch are the ſuperior claſs of exiſtence in nature, for whoſe ſake all things are made: And he may venture to aſſume, that whatever form of proceeding beſt accommodates the world of intelligence, is the proper ſtate of that univerſe in which this order of being is ſupreme.

It is, therefore, ſaid with great juſtice, that to be governed by fixed laws is eſſential to the form of nature; and that the general law is wiſely and beneficently obſerved, even where it operates to particular inconvenience or hurt. For the wiſe may obſerve it, learn to avail themſelves of it, and avoid the inconvenience that would reſult from inattention or ignorance.

It appears alſo, that thoſe reaſoners are in a great miſtake, who think to ſupercede the exiſtence of mind and Providence, by tracing the operations of nature to their phyſical laws: for phyſical law is the characteriſtic operation of unerring mind. The unerring mind does now what it always did, and is incapable of change; becauſe to change would be to deviate from what is beſt.

So far the argument relates to the circumſtances of human life, and to the mixture of phyſical evil in the lot of man: But the depravity of his own nature, and the frequency of his crimes, are evils more real, and leſs reconcileable to the conception of a juſt and beneficent author.

To this difficulty the common ſolution, and belike the true one, is, that man being intelligent and free, he alone is account-

able

able for the acts of his will. The will cannot be over-ruled to any purpose, without transferring the moral quality from the person whose choice is so over-ruled, to the will that constrains him.

Under a moral government virtue may exist and improve: but under a mere physical necessity it can exist only in the power that imposes the necessity.

A being that is destined to acquire perfection must originate in defect; and the permission of vice, that results for a time from this defect, is consistent with the goodness of God: Has not malice, we may be asked, a deeper root in human nature than mere error or mistake? It may have such a root; but if error and mistake be sufficient to account, for the germ of this poisonous plant, we have no occasion to look for any root that is deeper. It is a maxim in reason, not to assume more causes than are existent in nature, and sufficient to explain the phenomena *.

Error and mistake may, no doubt, lead to competition and strife, to injury and suffering. And these we know are fruitful of malice. The injurious hates, because he distrusts and fears those whom he has injured. The injured hates from indignation and resentment.

To place men in the way of incurring these sentiments, it is not necessary that they should have set out with a design to injure. A mere conception of good in any matter of competition, where the success of one is detriment to another, will find the parties in a state of mutual distrust, disaffection, and hatred.

Among the errors to which man is exposed, in his first attempts to

* Vid. Regulæ Philosophandi Newtoni.

to form a notion of good and evil, one is peculiarly dangerous to the peace of ſociety, and apt to empoiſon the mind with vice; namely, the miſtake of precedence, or comparative advantage, whether in reſpect to rank, power, or wealth, for excellence. And the conſequent habit of conſidering all advantages, not in reſpect to their abſolute value; but in reſpect to the comparative relation of leſs or greater which they bear to the condition of other men. If one is to precede; others muſt be contented to follow. The eminence of one is the depreſſion of another. Celebrity conſiſts in being more talked of than other men; and riches in having more wealth than is common. In this point of view, the induſtry of one to better himſelf is oppoſition and injury to another: Men are mutually rivals, competitors, and enemies; and the occaſions of diſtruſt, animoſity, and malice, more frequent than thoſe of confidence and good will.

Under ſuch apprehenſions of good and evil the occaſions of jealouſy and hatred accumulate in the progreſs of counteraction and ſtrife. We may obſerve them particularly in the competitions for power, for fame, for love, for court preferment, and favour. To prevent them entirely, nothing more ſeems to be wanting, but a conception of good, limited to things, in which the ſucceſs of one is conſiſtent with that of another: And, if truth leads to the knowledge of ſuch a good we may conſider the preſent ſtate of man, or the period of his exiſtence that is now paſſing away, as but a tranſition to a better, in which malice, in the progreſs of information, will be corrected; and every other evil diſpoſition or habit, reſulting from his ignorance or falſe apprehenſion will be ſuppreſſed.

To have moral agents in nature, the choice of their actions muſt be free; or at moſt, ſubjected to a diſcipline that may furniſh

furniſh the mind with ſufficient occaſions of obſervation and experience, to correct its own errors, and to reform what is wrong in its diſpoſitions or actions. The queſtion, therefore, reſpecting the wiſdom and goodneſs of Providence, is, How far ſuch a moral diſcipline is perceivable in the preſent order of things? Is there enough, in this order, to lead intelligence in the diſcernment of good and evil? Are the admonitions, on the ſide of morality, ſufficient to point out the choice, and to win the affections?

To this queſtion we may ſafely anſwer in the affirmative. A firſt notion may be erroneous, but continued experience muſt lead to the truth. The conſequences of error and folly are often diſaſtrous, and always diſagreeable. The conſciouſneſs of moral evil is attended with remorſe, ſhame, and deſpair; that of integrity and innocence, with ſentiments directly oppoſite: Inſomuch, that the teſtimony of conſcience, which has been emphatically termed, *The Lamp of God in the Soul of Man*, is a ſtriking evidence of his preſence to adminiſter light; and to enforce the diſcipline, ſo far as it is proper to be applied, to the inſtruction and guidance of a conſcious and voluntary agent.

Man is entered on a progreſs, in which he is deſtined to owe to himſelf the good or the evil incident to his nature. He has a merit in what he acquires of the one, and is reſponſible for what he incurs of the other. He is ſuſceptible of indefinite advancement, engaged in a road of experience and diſcipline, which points him forward to his end. He has diſpoſitions that render a ſtate of amity, with his fellow-creatures, agreeable; a ſtate of enmity and malice, unhappy: With a pungent ſenſe of his defects, where they ſerve to debaſe him; with an agreeable ſenſe of every valuable attainment, in the feelings of a good conſcience

ſcience and ſelf approbation. He is thus urged, by experience, to advance in the line of his improvement: And therefore, notwithſtanding the defects which may yet remain in any particular period of his progreſs, he is to be conſidered not as a blemiſh, but as a beauty in the order of nature; or, in the ſcale of being, an approach to the higheſt excellence of which created nature is ſuſceptible.

In this progreſſive ſtate of man, much is gained in the ſteps which are made from the cradle to the grave; and progreſſion ever ſuppoſes that what is gained in any ſucceſſive period, was wanting in a former. The juſt notions of things, the candour, reſolution, and force of mind, which are gained in manhood and age, were wanting in youth or childhood. Infancy, nevertheleſs, hath its merit, as the bloſſom of youth; and the whole is to be eſtimated, not from the ſimultaneous attainment of any particular point of time, but from the collected aſpect of a nature that is formed to advance and to perfect itſelf. We anticipate, in the ſeedling oak and the pine, the future ornaments of the wood; and eſtimate the germ of any plant, not by the ſeed leaf alone, but by the form it is deſtined to gain in the maturity of its ſpecies.

What is created can never equal its creator, and in the higheſt is therefore imperfect. With reſpect to ſuch beings, the leaſt defect is the greateſt perfection. A defect which is always diminiſhing, or in a regular courſe of ſupply, we may ſuppoſe to be the perfection of created nature. No fixed or definite meaſure can equal it; for, in the courſe of its progreſs, it muſt indefinitely ſurpaſs every finite excellence that is fixed or ſtationary. In its continual approach to the infinite perfection of what is eternal,

it may be compared to that curve, deſcribed by geometers, as in continual approach to a ſtraight line, which it never can reach.

In a progreſs begun with this indefinite proſpect, ſucceſſive periods, even thoſe of the greateſt advancement, may be marked with their reſpective defects and imperfections. The intelligent being, at his outſet, though qualified to obtain knowledge, not only muſt begin in ignorance; but, while he continues to learn, is ſtill ſhort of omniſcience, and may be expoſed to error. At any ſtage of his progreſs, falſe notions of good may lead him to vice, to competition with his fellow-creatures, to animoſity, ſtrife, and malice; but thoſe, in the ſufferings they conſtitute, carry the ſeeds of correction along with them. And the greateſt reprobate, when awaked from his dream of iniquity, may be ſurpriſed that he could have erred ſo long or ſo much. Nor muſt it be ſaid, that in this progreſs of intelligent being, of which man is an example, the happineſs of a preſent time is ſacrificed to the attainments which are to be made in a following one. Infancy hath its gratifications no leſs than youth, and this no leſs than manhood, or the happieſt compoſure of temper in the laſt attainments of age.

It is not by any means neceſſary, that men ſhould forego the happineſs of their preſent ſtate, in order to obtain that of a future one; nor are ordinary men (provided envy, malice, or jealouſy, do not prevail in their tempers), bereft of enjoyment, even in the midſt of the evils of which they complain.

The happineſs of man, when moſt diſtinguiſhed, is not proportioned to his external poſſeſſions, but to the exertion and application of his faculties: It is not proportioned to his exemption from difficulty or danger, but to the magnanimity, courage, and fortitude, with which he acts. It is not proportioned to the

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benefits he receives, but to thoſe he beſtows, or rather to the candour and benevolence with which, as a perſon obliging or obliged, he is ready to embrace his fellow-creatures, and to acknowledge or reward their merits. Even while he complains of his lot he is not unhappy. His complaints are no more than the ſymptom of a mind that is engaged in ſome purſuit by which his wiſhes are engroſſed, but of which the end is ſtill unobtained. In the abſence of ſuch occupations and troubles, as are preſcribed by neceſſity, he deviſes, for the moſt part, a ſimilar courſe of occupation, trouble, difficulty, and danger, for himſelf.

The rich and the powerful, (ſay the vulgar) are happy, for they are exempted from labour and care: Their pleaſures come unſought for, and without any allay of pain. But what are the high objects of ambition to which the wealthy and the powerful aſpire? Are they not often ſituations of great trouble and danger, in continual application to arduous affairs of ſtate, or in frequent expoſure to the dangers of war? What do the idle deviſe to fill up the blank of real affairs? Not a bed of repoſe, nor a ſucceſſion of inert and ſlothful enjoyments: They deviſe ſports that engage them in labour and toil, not leſs ſevere than that of the indigent who works for his bread; and expoſe them to dangers not leſs real, than thoſe which occur in what are thought the moſt hazardous purſuits of human life.

In the intermiſſion of buſineſs, and in the abſence of danger, what has the ſecure and the idle, under the denomination of play, deviſed for his own recreation? A courſe of ſerious and intenſe application, a ſtate of ſuſpenſe between good and ill fortune, between profit and loſs. While he ſtrenuouſly labours to obtain the one and to avoid the other, he calls the one a good, and

and the other an evil: but he himſelf has voluntarily incurred this chance of good or of evil. He exults in gain, and he laments his loſs; but he ſtill freely embraces the chance by which he is expoſed to one or the other. The game, ſuch as it is, he conſiders as a fit paſtime for himſelf; and though he complains of his fortune when unſucceſsful, he is never ſo unreaſonable, as to arraign the inventor of the game for having admitted the poſſibility of ill as well as good fortune.

The paſſion for play is comparatively mean and unworthy; but the illuſtration it brings to the condition of man is appoſite, and will juſtify the terms in which we conclude, that, in the game of human life, the inventor knew well how to accommodate the players.

If man be a worthy actor in this order of things, the ſcene is prepared for the part it behoves him to act: And from his caſe, as well as from the general aſpect of things, we may venture to conclude with Epictetus, that to thoſe who are qualified with intelligence and a grateful mind, every circumſtance or event in the order of nature may ſerve to manifeſt, and to extol the ſupreme wiſdom and goodneſs of God.

CHAP. III.

OF MAN'S PROGRESSIVE NATURE.

SECTION I.

Of the Diſtinction of Natures, Progreſſive and Stationary, and its immediate application to the Subjects of Science.

THERE is in nature a well known diſtinction of things progreſſive, and ſtationary, to which we muſt attend in the farther purſuit of our ſubject. PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. I.

To

To be ſtationary, it is not neceſſary that a ſubject ſhould be incapable of change, even from the action of any external cauſe: It is ſufficient that it have not any principle of change in its own nature. To be progreſſive, on the contrary, does not conſiſt in any variation or change which an external cauſe may produce; but in thoſe tranſitions, from one ſtate to another, which proceed from a principle of advancement in the ſubject itſelf.

A block of ſtone, from the quarry, may receive, in the hands of a workman, any variety of forms, but left to itſelf, would remain in its ſtate.

A ſeedling plant, on the contrary, in a favourable ſoil and expoſure, takes root and grows of itſelf.

Progreſſive natures are ſubject to viciſſitudes of advancement or decline, but are not ſtationary, perhaps, in any period of their exiſtence. Thus, in the material world, ſubjects organized, being progreſſive, when they ceaſe to advance, begin to decline, however inſenſibly, at the time of their tranſition from one to the other. In this conſiſt the operation or failure of vegetable and animal life. In their advancement, the matter of which they are compoſed accumulates, and at every period acquires a form that approaches to the end of their progreſs. The principle of life itſelf gains ſtrength or ability to diſcharge, and to vary the functions of nature. In their decline they fade, ſhrink, and abate of their vigour and force.

Intelligence appears to be, in a ſtill higher degree, a principle of progreſſion, and ſubject to greater extremes of comparative advancement or degradation. It is advanced by continual acceſ-

ſions of obſervation and knowledge; of ſkill and habit, in the practice of arts; of improving diſcernment of good and evil; of reſolute purpoſe or power. It declines through defect of memory, diſcernment, affection, and reſolution.

While ſubjects ſtationary are deſcribed by the enumeration of co-exiſtent parts, and quieſcent qualities, ſubjects progreſſive are characteriſed by the enumeration of ſteps, in the paſſage from one form or ſtate of exiſtence to another, and by the termination or point of approach, whether near or remote, to which the ſucceſſive movements of their nature are directed.

The rank of a progreſſive ſubject is to be eſtimated, not by its condition at any particular ſtage of its progreſs, but by its capacity and deſtination to advance in the ſcale of being. From the feebleſt ſhoot or ſeed-leaf of the oak, though more diminutive than many plants of the garden, we already forecaſt the ſtately fabric it is deſigned to raiſe in the foreſt. In the human infant, though inferior to the young of many other animals, we anticipate the beauty of youth, the vigorous ſoul of manhood, and the wiſdom of age. And the higheſt rank, in the ſcale of created exiſtence, is due to that nature, if ſuch there be, which is deſtined to grow in perfection, and may grow without end: its good is advancement, and its evil, decline.

We are inclined to conſider progreſſion as made up of ſtationary periods; as we conſider a circle as a polygon of an infinite number of ſides; a fluid as made up of ſolid parts indefinitely ſmall; and duration itſelf, as made up of ſucceſſive points, or indiviſible moments of time.

In this our conception is inaccurate, and our reaſoning, of courſe, likely to become incorrect. Progreſſion may, no doubt, be divided into periods; but in no period, perhaps, is the ſubject ſtationary. Every ſubdiviſion, like the whole of its progreſs, is a tranſition from one ſtate to another, and through ſtates intermediate, more or leſs numerous according to the diviſions under which we are pleaſed to conceive them. The progreſs of intelligent being, for inſtance, may be more or leſs rapid, but is continual; and in the very continuance of exiſtence, and the repetition of conſciouſneſs and perception, muſt receive continual increments of knowledge and thought. Or in the failure of the ſource from which it derives improvement, is likely to incur degradation and decline.

For our purpoſe, however, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that the ſtate of nature or the diſtinctive character of any progreſſive being is to be taken, not from its deſcription at the outſet, or at any ſubſequent ſtage of its progreſs; but from an accumulative view of its movement throughout. The oak is diſtinguiſhable from the pine, not merely by its ſeed leaf; but by every ſucceſſive aſpect of its form; by its foliage in every ſucceſſive ſeaſon; by its acorn; by its ſpreading top; by its lofty growth, and the length of its period. And the ſtate of nature, relative to every tree in the wood, includes all the varieties of form or dimenſion through which it is known to paſs in the courſe of its nature.

By parity of reaſon, the natural ſtate of a living creature includes all its known variations, from the embryo and the fœtus to the breathing animal, the adoleſcent and the adult, through which life in all its varieties is known to paſs.

The ſtate of nature, relative to man, is alſo a ſtate of progreſſion equally real, and of greater extent. The individual receives the firſt ſtamina of his frame in a growing ſtate. His ſtature is waxing, his limbs and his organs gain ſtrength, and he himſelf a growing facility in the uſe of them. His faculties improve by exerciſe, and are in a continual ſtate of exertion.

If his thoughts paſs from one ſubject to another, he can return to the ſubject he has left, with ſome acquired advantage of diſcernment or comprehenſion. He accumulates perceptions and obſervations, takes cognizance of new ſubjects, without forgeting the old; knows more, of courſe, at every ſubſequent period than he did in a former; reaſons more ſecurely; penetrates obſcurities, which at firſt embarraſſed him; and performs every operation of thought with more facility and more ſucceſs.

With reſpect to the period of his exiſtence he ſees it but in part. When he looks back to the point from which he ſet out, he cannot deſcry it; when he looks forward to the end of his line, he cannot foreſee it. He may obſerve the birth and the death of a fellow creature, but knows nothing of his own. If he were to aſſume the earlieſt date he remembers as the beginning of his exiſtence, he might ſoon be convinced that he overlooked a conſiderable period which had preceded; or if he ſhould ſuppoſe his being to end with the diſſolution of his animal frame, it is poſſible he might be equally miſtaken. Yet he finds nothing in the world around him beyond the limits of what he can collect from the remembrance of the paſt, or infer by ſagacity from the laws of nature in foreſight of the future, from which he can fix any certain marks of his own beginning or his end.

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Such, without entering into the peculiarities or unequal degrees of power incident to different men, we may aſſume as the ſtate of nature relative to the individual.

The ſtate of nature relative to the ſpecies is differently conſtituted, and of different extent. It conſiſts in the continual ſucceſſion of one generation to another; in progreſſive attainments made by different ages; communicated with additions from age to age; and in periods, the fartheſt advanced, not appearing to have arrived at any neceſſary limit. This progreſs indeed is ſubject to interruption, and may come to a cloſe, or give way to viciſſitude at any of its ſtages; but not more neceſſarily at the period of higheſt attainment than at any other.

So long as the ſon continues to be taught what the father knew, or the pupil begins where the tutor has ended, and is equally bent on advancement; to every generation the ſtate of arts and accommodations already in uſe ſerves but as ground work for new invention and ſucceſſive improvement. As Newton did not acquieſce in what was obſerved by Kepler and Galileo; no more have ſucceſſive aſtronomers reſtricted their view to what Newton has demonſtrated. And with reſpect to the mechanic and commercial arts, even in the midſt of the moſt laboured accommodations, ſo long as there is any room for improvement, invention is buſy as if nothing had yet been done to ſupply the neceſſities, or complete the conveniencies of human life: But even here, and in all its ſteps of progreſſion, this active nature, in reſpect to the advantages, whether of knowledge or art, derived from others, if there be not a certain effort to advance, is expoſed to reverſe and decline. The generation, in which there is no deſire to know more or practiſe better than its predeceſſors, will probably

bably neither know ſo much nor practiſe ſo well. And the decline of ſucceſſive generations, under this wain of intellectual ability, is not leſs certain than the progreſs made under the operation of a more active and forward diſpoſition.

Such is the ſtate of nature relative to the human ſpecies; and, in this, as in every other progreſſive ſubject, the preſent being intermediate to the paſt and the future, may be different from either: Each is a part of the whole; and neither can, with any reaſon, be ſaid to be more natural than the others. It cannot be ſaid, that it is more natural for the oak to ſpring from its ſeed than to overſhadow the plain; that it is more natural for water to guſh from the land in ſprings than to flow in rivers, and to mix with the ſea.

The ſtate of nature relative to man, however, is ſometimes a mere term of abſtraction, in which he is ſtated apart from the ſociety he forms, from the art he invents, the ſcience he acquires, or the political eſtabliſhment he makes: And, when his progreſs in any of theſe reſpects is to be conſidered, it is no doubt convenient to conſider the particular in queſtion apart from himſelf, and from every thing elſe. It is not, however, to be ſuppoſed, that man ever exiſted apart from the qualities and operations of his own nature, or that any one operation and quality exiſted without the others. The whole, indeed, is connected together, and any part may vary in meaſure or degree, while in its nature and kind it is ſtill the ſame.

The child may be conſidered apart from his parent, and the parent apart from his child; but the latter would not have exiſted without the former. If we trace human ſociety back to this

its ſimpleſt conſtitution, even there the ſociety was real: If we trace human thought back to its ſimpleſt exertions, even there it was an exerciſe of underſtanding, and ſome effort of invention or ſkill.

The groups in which the rudeſt of men were placed, had their chiefs and their members; and nothing that the human ſpecies ever attained, in the lateſt period of its progreſs, was altogether without a germ or principle from which it is derived, in the earlieſt or moſt antient ſtate of mankind.

It may no doubt be convenient, we may again repeat, in ſpeculation, or in aſſigning the origin and in deriving the progreſs of any attainment, to conſider the attainment itſelf abſtractly, or apart from the faculty or power by which it is made; and we muſt not deny ourſelves the uſe of ſuch abſtractions, in treating of human nature, any more than in treating of any other ſubject. But there is a caution to be obſerved in the uſe of abſtractions, relating to any ſubject whatever: That they be not miſtaken for realities, nor obtruded for hiſtorical facts.

The language of geometry is neceſſarily abſtract. A point is mere place, conſidered apart from any dimenſion whatever. A line is length, conſidered apart from breadth or thickneſs. A ſurface is length and breadth, conſidered apart from thickneſs. And, in a ſolid, all the dimenſions of length, breadth, and thickneſs, are admitted. But the geometrical abſtractions are no where miſtaken for realities: Length is not ſuppoſed to exiſt without breadth, nor length and breadth without thickneſs. Or, if ſuch miſtakes are actually made, yet, no one would infer that lines are more natural than ſurfaces, or ſurfaces more natural than ſolids.

Such miſtake and miſapprehenſion of terms is ſcarcely admitted, except in treating of human nature. In every other progreſſive ſubject, progreſſion itſelf, not any particular ſtep in the progreſs, is ſuppoſed to conſtitute the natural ſtate. The laſt ſhoot of the oak, after it has ſtood five hundred years in the foreſt, and carried a thouſand branches, is not deemed leſs natural than the firſt.

Under this term, of the *State of Nature*, authors affect to look back to the firſt ages of man, not without ſome apparent deſign to depreciate his nature, by placing his origin in ſome unfavourable point of view; as we derogate, from the ſuppoſed honours of a family, by looking back to the mechanics or peaſants, from whom its anceſtors were deſcended.

Hobbes contended, that men were originally in a ſtate of war, and undiſpoſed to amity or peace; that ſociety, altogether unnatural to its members, is to be eſtabliſhed and preſerved by force. Or this, at leaſt, may be ſuppoſed to follow from his general aſſumption that the ſtate of nature was a ſtate of war.

If this point muſt be ſeriouſly argued, we may aſk in what ſenſe war is the ſtate of nature? Not ſurely the only ſtate of which men are ſuſceptible; for we find them at peace as well as at war: Nor can we ſuppoſe it the ſtate which mankind ought at all times to prefer; for it labours under many inconveniences and defects: But it was, we may be told, the firſt and the earlieſt ſtate, from which men were relieved by convention and adventitious eſtabliſhments.

This aſſertion, that war was the earlieſt ſtate of mankind, is made without proof; for the firſt ages of the human ſpecies, in times paſt, are as little known as the laſt, that may cloſe the ſcene of its being in times to come. In every progreſſion, it is true, may be conceived, a point of origin, and a point of termination, to be collected from the direction in which the progreſs proceeds. The ſun, even by a perſon who never ſaw him riſe or ſet, may be ſuppoſed, from the courſe he holds, to have riſen in the eaſt, and to ſet in the weſt. Man, who is advancing in knowledge and art, may be ſuppoſed to have begun in ignorance or rudeneſs; but it is not neceſſary to ſuppoſe that a ſpecies, of whom the individuals are ſometimes at war, and ſometimes at peace, muſt have begun in war. There is, on the contrary, much reaſon to ſuppoſe, that they began in peace, and continued in peace, until ſome occaſion of quarrel aroſe between them.

The progreſs of the ſpecies, in population and numbers, implies an original peace, at leaſt, between the ſexes, and between the parent and his child, in family together; and, if we are to ſuppoſe a ſtate of war between brothers, this, at leaſt, muſt have been poſterior to the peace in which they were born and brought up, to the peace in which they arrived at the poſſeſſion of thoſe talents, and that force, which they come to employ for mutual deſtruction.

Another philoſopher, in this ſchool of nature, has choſen to fix the original deſcription of man, in a ſtate of brutality, unconſcious of himſelf, and ignorant of his kind; ſo far from being deſtined to the uſe of reaſon, that all the attempts he has made, at the exerciſe of this dangerous faculty, has opened but one continual ſource of depravation and miſery.

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But, as the former of theſe philoſophers has not told us what beneficent power, different from man himſelf, has made peace for this refractory being; no more has the other informed us, who invented reaſon for man; whoſe thoughts and reflections firſt diſturbed the tranquillity of his brutal nature, and brought this victim of care into this anxious ſtate of reflection, to which are imputed ſo many of his follies and ſufferings.

Until we are told by whom the ſtate of nature was done away, and a new one ſubſtituted, we muſt continue to ſuppoſe that this is the work of man himſelf; and the whole of what theſe ſhrewd philoſophers have taught, amounts to no more than this, that man would be found in a ſtate of war, or in a ſtate of brutality, if it were not for himſelf, for his own qualifications, and his endeavours to obtain a better; and that, in reality, the ſituation he gains is the effect of a faculty by which he is diſpoſed to chuſe for himſelf.

This we are ready to admit. Man is made for ſociety and the attainments of reaſon. If, by any conjuncture, he is deprived of theſe advantages, he will ſooner or later find his way to them. If he came from a beginning, defective in theſe reſpects, he was, from the firſt, diſpoſed to ſupply his defects; in proceſs of time has actually done ſo, continued to improve upon every advantage he gains: And thus to advance, we may again repeat, is the ſtate of nature relative to him.

It were abſurd, to think of depreciating a progreſſive being, by pointing out the ſtate of defect, from which he has paſſed, to the attainment of a better and a higher condition; for ſo to paſs is the ſpecific excellence of his nature.

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The grandeur of the foreſt is not the leſs real, for its having ſprung up from among the weeds of the field: The genius of Newton, not the leſs to be admired, for his having grown up from the ignorance and ſimplicity of his infant years: Nor the policy of Athens, Sparta, or Rome, leſs to be valued, becauſe they may have ſprung from hordes, no way ſuperior to thoſe, who are now found in different parts of Africa or America.

It is the nature of progreſſion to have an origin, far ſhort of the attainments which it is directed to make; and not any preciſe meaſure of attainment, but the paſſage or tranſition from defect to perfection is that which conſtitutes the felicity of a progreſſive nature. The happy being, accordingly, whoſe deſtination is to better himſelf, muſt not conſider the defect under which he labours, at the outſet, or in any ſubſequent part of his progreſs, as a limit ſet to his ambition, but as an occaſion and a ſpur to his efforts.

The life and activity of intelligent being conſiſts in the conſciouſneſs or perception of an improveable ſtate, and in the effort to operate upon it for the better. This conſtitutes an unremitting principle of ambition in human nature. Men have different objects, and ſucceed unequally in the purſuit of them: But every perſon, in one ſenſe or another, is earneſt to better himſelf.

Man is by nature an artiſt, endowed with ingenuity, diſcernment, and will. Theſe faculties he is qualified to employ on different materials; but is chiefly concerned to employ them on himſelf: Over this ſubject his power is moſt immediate and moſt complete; as he may know the law, according to which his progreſs is effected, by conforming himſelf to it, he may, haſten or ſecure the reſult.

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The bulk of mankind are, like other parts of the ſyſtem, ſubjected to the law of their nature, and, without knowing it, are led to accompliſh its purpoſe: While they intend no more than ſubſiſtence and accommodation, or the peace of ſociety, and the ſafety of their perſons and their property, their faculties are brought into uſe, and they profit by exercife. In mutually conducting their relative intereſts and concerns, they acquire the habits of political life; are made to taſte of their higheſt enjoyments, in the affections of benevolence, integrity, and elevation of mind; and, before they have deliberately conſidered in what the merit or felicity of their own nature conſiſt, have already learned to perform many of its nobleſt functions.

Nature in this as in many other inſtances does not entruſt the conduct of her works to the precarious views and deſigns of any ſubordinate agent. But if the progreſs of man in every inſtance were matter of neceſſity or even of contingency, and no way dependent on his will, nor ſubjected to his command, we ſhould conclude that this ſovereign rank and reſponſibility of a moral agent with which he is veſted, were given in vain; and the capacity of erecting a fabric of art, on the foundation of the laws of nature, were denied to him in that department preciſely in which they are of the higheſt account: If he may work on the clay that is placed under his foot, and form it into models of grace and beauty; if he may employ the powers of gravitation, elaſticity, and magnetiſm, as the miniſters of his pleaſure; we may ſuppoſe, alſo, that the knowledge of laws operating on himſelf ſhould direct him how to proceed, and enable him to haſten the advantages, to which his progreſſive nature is competent. If

his Maker have deſtined his faculties to improve by exerciſe, and by the attainment of habits, there is no doubt that he himſelf may chuſe what exerciſe he will perform, and what habits he ſhall acquire.

But in order to profit by the laws of progreſſion which take place in his frame, it behoves him to recollect what they are, and to take his reſolution reſpecting the purpoſe to which he will apply their force.

To this object, he is urged at once by the double conſideration of a good to be obtained, and of an evil to be avoided. Moſt ſubjects in nature, which, from the energy of a ſalutary principle, are ſuſceptible of advancement, are likewiſe, by the failure or abuſe of that principle, ſuſceptible of degradation and ruin. Plants and animals are known to periſh, in the ſame gradual manner in which they advance into ſtrength and beauty. Man, with whom the ſources of good and of evil are more entruſted to his own management, is likewiſe expoſed, in a much higher degree, to the extremes of comparative degradation and miſery. The progreſs of nations in one age, to high meaſures of intellectual attainment and cultivated manners, is not more remarkable than the decline that ſometimes enſues in their fall to extreme depravation and intellectual debility.

It may not be in the power of the individual greatly to promote the advancement or to retard the decline of his country. But every perſon, being principally intereſted in himſelf, is the abſolute maſter of his own will, and for the choice he ſhall have made is alone reſponſible.

We

We ſhall proceed therefore under this title to ſtate the principles of progreſſion in the nature of man, and the laws of which every one may avail himſelf in chuſing the direction he ſhould follow, and the attainment he ſhould make.

SECTION II.

Of the Principles of Progreſſion in Human Nature.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. II.

AMONG the principles of progreſſion in human nature, may be reckoned, firſt of all, what is common to man with other beings endowed with life; the vegetating and animal powers, by which the organized body waxes in ſtature and in ſtrength.

Theſe powers are known to us only by their effects, operating in the midſt of organs and combinations of matter, ſubject to waſte, and requiring ſupply. The living forms are in a continual ſtate of fluctuation and change. The ſupply of one period exceeding the waſte, and that of another period falling ſhort of it, they advance and recede. They are, at the ſame time, expoſed to diſturbance and interruption from external cauſes; and affected in their courſe by inequalities of health or diſeaſe: But the powers of life, with which they are endowed in the moſt uninterrupted poſſeſſion of health, wear out; or incur a decline and a final extinction.

Thus

Thus the principle of life, by which organized matter for a while is animated, itſelf ceaſes to act; and the materials on which it operated depart from their organization, and become inert.

With theſe are connected, in the human frame, a power of intelligence, conſcious of itſelf, and of its gradual enlargement. This important circumſtance is not otherwiſe known than as a fact, or as the particular phenomenon of a general law, common to all living and active natures: *That a faculty, or organ, which is properly exerted, gets acceſſion of ſtrength or maſs; whilſt that which is overſtrained, or neglected, goes to decay.*

The improvement of human faculties, therefore, is likely to depend on the propriety of their exerciſes; and the progreſs of the ſpecies itſelf will, without their intending it, keep pace with the ordinary purſuits, in which ſucceſſive generations are engaged.

Under the general title of exerciſes, may be enumerated the various purſuits, into which mankind are led by the wants and neceſſities they have to ſupply, the inconveniences they have to remove, or the advantages which are placed in their view; as the ſpur which nature applies to excite and to direct their exertions.

The purſuits of human life, are, in part, occaſioned by the exigencies of mere animal nature, and have for object the ſupplies of neceſſity, accommodation, or pleaſure.

The ſupply which is provided for any, or all of theſe purpoſes,

conſiſts of many ſeparate articles, which, variouſly diſtributed in the form of property, render commerce and exchange a mutual conveniency to the parties concerned, a conſequence which may juſtify our diſtinguiſhing the expedients which are employed in procuring or diſpoſing of theſe articles, under the general title of commercial arts.

The active purſuits of man reſult alſo from the exigencies of human ſociety, or its need of eſtabliſhments, to reſtrain diſorders, and to procure the benefits of which it is ſuſceptible.

The proviſions required for the ſafety and better government of men in ſociety, may be termed the political arts.

Men are alſo engaged in the purſuits of knowledge, and in multiplying intellectual attainments; no leſs an exigency of the mind, than the means of ſubſiſtence and accommodation, are an exigency of mere animal life.

To penetrate the order eſtabliſhed in nature; to emulate this order in works of deſign and invention; to unfold the principles of eſtimation, and realize the conceptions of excellence and beauty, in works to be executed by human art, or in the character and mind of the artiſt himſelf, is the peculiar province of man; and in his conduct, with reſpect to it, gives occaſion to the moſt improving exertion of his faculties.

Theſe exerciſes of intelligence, whether found in purſuits of knowledge, of elegant deſign, or moral improvement, may be ſtated under their reſpective titles, of inveſtigation and theory, of fine arts, and moral philoſophy.

To

To the end for which any, or all of theſe arts are practiſed, the principle of ambition applies itſelf. This is defined in our dictionary, *the deſire of ſomething better than is poſſeſſed at preſent*, and prevents acquieſcence in any preciſe meaſure of attainment already made. In the purſuits of wealth, it is the deſire of more property than is poſſeſſed at preſent: In civilization, it is the deſire of eſtabliſhments more complete, and more effectual for the peace and good order of ſociety: In the purſuits of ſcience, it is the deſire of more knowledge: In the fine arts, it is the deſire of more finiſhed productions: And in philoſophy, it is the deſire of ſchemes more correct and accompliſhed, applicable to the character, action, and inſtitutions of men.

In each of theſe purſuits, or applications of mind, we may farther remark, that the operation does not paſs away in mere tranſient exertion; or, like the ſhadow of a cloud on the plain, leaves not a track behind. Continued practice is productive of habit, or facility of doing again what has been done; ſome acquired inclination, and ſome acceſſion of power, which ſerve to give the mind a poſſeſſion of the inclination or will it has for any time entertained, and of the faculty it has brought into uſe.

Habit is the well known effect of continuance in any employment or courſe of life. Like every other law, which may be ſaid to ſtand prominent on the ſurface of nature, it is familiar to every one; and, like the laws of gravitation and motion, is made the moſt ordinary foundation of method, in whatſoever we do: Hence, we go to learn a calling, by continued endeavours to attain it; and repeat a performance, at which we are at firſt

aukward, in order to become more dextrous or expert in the practice of it.

Such then, in general, we may conſider as the principles of progreſſion in the human mind; but the law of nature, as it operates in each, yet merits a more ample diſcuſſion. That of ambition and habit, in particular, though the laſt in this enumeration, may very properly have the firſt place; as they enter into the conſideration of every purſuit and attainment, of which they are the fruit or the incitement, the active engagements of men being prompted by ambition, and, in fact, to be eſtimated very much by the habits they furniſh and leave behind.

Habit is known to be that, by which the good or bad actions of men remain with them, and become part of their characters. But how far a perſon may avail himſelf of this law, in chooſing not only what he ſhall do at any particular time, but alſo what he ſhall at all times be inclined to do, has not, perhaps, been ſufficiently tried; and the importance of the queſtion may juſtify a detail of the ſubject, however little recommended by novelty, or entitled to the praiſe of diſcovery: It is indeed dwelt upon here, not as a matter new to the obſervation of any one, but as a matter which ought to be attended to, as much as it is known.

SECTION

SECTION III.

Of Habit in general.

Παντα μεν ουν εμοιγε δοκει τα καλα και τα αισχρα ασκητα ειναι.

SOC. APUD XEN.

HABIT is a ſource of inclination, but is not numbered among the original propenſities of human nature; becauſe it is not that by which we are at firſt inclined to act, but a diſpoſition which reſults from our having already acted. It is the acquired relation of a perſon to the ſtate in which he has repeatedly been; as the relation of a tradeſman to his calling; of a ſtateſman to the detail of affairs; or of a warrior to the operations of war: In all of which the adept is diſtinguiſhed from the novice, by a difference of inclination or choice, by ſuperior ſkill, power, and facility of performance.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. III.

The fact is familiar, and may be aſſumed as a law of nature common to men, and to animals of every deſcription, *That whatever the living nature is able to perform without impairing its organs, if perſiſted in, will produce a habit.* In this habit, as mankind experience it, there is implied ſometimes a gradual diminution of pain, which accompanies firſt attempts; a promptitude, gradually acquired, in ſurmounting difficulties; acceſſions of power and ſtrength, in producing effects; and a propenſity or diſpoſition, even without reflection or deſign, to be doing that to which the perſon acting has been ſometimes accuſtomed.

In ſubjects of deſirable attainment, habit is matter of felicity and commendation. In matters idle or unneceſſary, it is reckoned a misfortune or a blemiſh.

There is ſomewhat analogous to this law of nature in the vegetable and mechanical kingdoms, as well as in the animal or in the rational. The twig that is turned from its poſition, and forced away from the natural direction of its growth, will continue to vegetate in its new direction, or will come round and become bent, in order to recover at every ſhoot the natural direction from which it was diverted. Even bodies deſtitute of organization, have an elaſtic power, by which they recover from any change that has been made in their figure, or in the relative poſition of their parts. As ſoon as the external preſſure is withdrawn, they ſuddenly revert to their ordinary ſtate; but, under the effects of violence continued for any time, they are obſerved to become, in a manner leſs reluctant to a ſtate into which at firſt they were forced; and in which, if retained during the time that is neceſſary for this effect, they become quieſcent, adopt a new figure,

and exert their elaſtic power, as before, in preſerving or recovering the ſtate they had acquired. Thus the bow, that has been too long bent, at firſt becomes weak, or if kept ſo long in that poſition as to acquire a new ſhape, its elaſticity operates in retaining a curvature contrary to that which it originally had. And it may be figuratively ſaid to have acquired a new habit.

An animal will move ſpontaneouſly, not only in the track to which he has an original propenſity or inſtinctive direction, but alſo in any track into which he has been forced, provided he has been made to move in it, during the period of time which is neceſſary for that purpoſe.

The period required to the acquiſition of a habit may be unequal in the caſe of different animals, and in the different performances to which it may be propoſed to train them.

In the caſe of man, when he is willing to acquire a habit, his acquiſition will be aided by his knowledge of the purpoſe, and by his inclination to obtain it: But, where he is laid under conſtraint, and ſubjected to a taſk without any concurrence of his own will, he is likely to be more reſtive and tardy in his progreſs than any other ſpecies of animal whatever: His averſion to conſtraint augments his diſlike to the purpoſe for which it is applied, and he is ingenious to thwart the deſign; the labour of his inſtructor or maſter is doubled, firſt, to overcome his repugnance, and next to continue the practice, until it has produced the ordinary effect of reconciling the practitioner to what he may at firſt have diſliked.

With reſpect to man, however, though diſpoſed to be his own

maſter, and unwilling to move in any trammels preſcribed to him, the effect of continuance, even when forced, much more when it is voluntary, is extremely conſpicuous: It is that which brings him to conceive objects in the form under which they have been repeatedly preſented to him: It is that which gives him a power or facility in performing what he has been repeatedly made to perform; which renders that pleaſant which was formerly painful, and gives him an inclination to be doing what he has repeatedly done.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Of Habits of Thinking.

AS the conception entertained in the preſent time is, to every perſon while he continues to entertain it, the ſtandard of truth and reality; it were difficult to perſuade him, that his preſent conviction, in any inſtance, is the mere effect of continued repreſentations, whether made to him in the ordinary courſe of things, in accidental coincidences, or in the received opinions and notions of other men.

This ſubject has been touched in a former ſection, though without any inclination to ſcepticiſm, or doubt of the conceptions which are attended with the genuine evidence of truth.

Nature, in providing the means of information, has warranted for truth and reality whatever ſhe uniformly or generally preſents in the order of her works: But what we raſhly infer from ſingular inſtances, or what is obtruded in vulgar opinions, may be ill-grounded and falſe; and yet men, in being repeatedly

ly made to conceive an object in the ſame way, come to miſtake their own habit of conception for an evidence of truth. Whence is it elſe, that the ſubjects of monarchy have one opinion reſpecting the expedience of political eſtabliſhments, and the members of democracy a different one? Whence is it that the creed of the vulgar is ſo different in Aſia, from what it is in Europe?

There are topics, no doubt, from which the enquiring mind may derive evidence of truth in theſe matters; but to theſe topics the vulgar ſeldom reſort, and are generally the more bigotted to their tenets, the leſs they recur to the grounds on which they reſt. The habit of unqueſtioned belief is, in fact, more powerful than evidence, to make the implicit believer not only reject any new information, but meet the attempt to convince him with ſurpriſe and deteſtation.

There are habits of thinking peculiar to nations, to different ages, and even to individuals of the ſame nation and age, taken up at firſt without evidence, and often tenaciouſly retained without being queſtioned. In Greece, it was thought diſhonourable to loſe the ſhield in battle, or turn the back upon an enemy: In Scythia, flight was thought an ordinary ſtratagem in war. In Greece, muſic and dancing were reckoned accompliſhments: At Rome they were reckoned diſgraceful. Our anceſtors conceived the military character, as that which diſtinguiſhed the lord or the gentleman: In their opinion, to be noble and military was the ſame. Aſk a gentleman of the continent of Europe what it is to be noble? He will anſwer, it is to be deſcended through a certain number of generations of noble anceſtors. Cannot merit compenſate the want of birth? The anſwer is, that merit may recommend

recommend a gentleman in his rank; but no merit can ever entitle a peaſant or a burgher to the reception that is due to a gentleman. Aſk him to diſcuſs the evidence of theſe opinions: He will reject the propoſal with contempt. The citizen, in a democratical government, on the contrary, cannot conceive how a man that is born free ſhould be inferior to another, who does not excel him in parts, integrity, or in ſervice performed to his country.

The authority of government itſelf, under every political eſtabliſhment, reſts on the habits of thinking, which prevail among the people. In monarchy, the ſubject has a reſpectful conception of royalty; and every one in his place has reſpect for the rank that is immediately over him: In ariſtocratical government, this reſpect is by the many, entertained for a few: And in republics, which admit every order of the people to ſome ſhare in the government of their country, the object of reſpect is conceived in the ſtate itſelf, and in the law by which it is governed. Sovereignty, in all theſe inſtances, is entruſted with force: and the arms of the community are wielded by ſome ſpecies of executive power that may be obliged, on occaſion, to employ them againſt the diſorderly. Even violence is effectual to ſupport the authority of government, ſo long as the bulk of the people agree in opinion with their rulers, and think that the force of the ſtate is properly applied: But, when the body of the people are of a different opinion, or conceive the uſe of force to be an act of injuſtice, they themſelves being conſcious of a ſuperior force, are not over-awed, but rather exaſperated, by its application, and made to unite in their own defence.

In ordinary times, the pretenſions of ſovereignty are received with

with implicit faith. Unneceſſary applications, whether of force, or even of argument, in ſupport of thoſe pretenſions, do but endanger the ſhaking of a habit of thinking, which might otherwiſe remain unmoved.

If force is to be employed againſt the ſenſe of a majority, this majority too, has force; which, when brought to the trial, muſt be found the greateſt, or, if reaſon is to be conſulted, the reaſon of the majority, under the influence of any opinion, is always on their own ſide. James I. of England would never ceaſe convincing his ſubjects, that he had a right to their perſonal ſervices, and to their property: but they had, at leaſt, begun to think otherwiſe; and he, by keeping the ſubject in view, entailed an argument on his poſterity, which ended in the downfall of his houſe.

Erroneous opinions are termed miſtakes or prejudices. A miſtake may be of any date; but if recent, for the moſt part, eaſily gives way to better information. Prejudice implies opinion of a certain ſtanding, or longer duration. The prejudices of childhood are ſometimes corrected by the experience of manhood or youth: But otherwiſe, the longer a notion has remained unqueſtioned, the more firm its poſſeſſion of the mind. For this reaſon national prejudices are, of all others, the moſt firmly retained; they are early inculcated, and remain unqueſtioned under the authority of numbers, or of the prevailing opinion, which individuals can ſeldom reſiſt.

The diſtinction of Greek and Barbarian, within the paſs of Thermopylæ, was an expreſſion of ſelf-eſtimation in the Greek, and of contempt to the reſt of mankind. The Athenians, we are

told, believed their city to be the centre of Greece, and Greece to be the centre of the world. Round theſe centres, other parts of the earth were conceived as no more than ſkirts and appendages. A like opinion is ſaid to be exemplified in the geography and ſelf eſtimation of the Chineſe.

Many a Muſſulman would be greatly ſurpriſed, or receive the information with contempt, if they were told, that there may be perſons, in a nation of Chriſtians, no leſs entitled to conſideration, or no leſs worthy of eſteem than the moſt renowned of the Faithful.

From ſuch facts, relating to the effects of habit, the principal leſſons to be taken are; firſt, reſpecting ourſelves, To abate of our confidence in notions long entertained, except in ſo far as they are ſupported by evidence; and next, To prevent our thinking unfavourably of the underſtanding or ſincerity of thoſe who differ from ourſelves in habits of thinking, which they may not have had ſufficient occaſion to queſtion; and to remember, that although ſuch habits render men obſtinate in miſtaken notions of things, they alſo render them ſteady to the truth, which they may have been ſo happy as to have once perceived; and that habit prevents the wavering and fluctuation of mind, which might otherwiſe ariſe from too eaſy reception of one opinion or notion of things for another.

It is wiſely appointed in the order of nature, that the courſe of events to a certain degree is regular, and that occaſions return at their ordinary periods. In what concerns the mind, there is a certain ſtability of thought, no leſs a part in the order of intellectual being. It is ſecured to the wiſe, not only by the

permanence of thoſe appearances on which they reſt a well grounded aſſent. It is confirmed, alſo, by of habit, which gives to opinion its continued poſſeſſion of the mind, without always recurring to the evidence on which it was originally founded.

In matters of mere diſcretion, or ſmall moment, ſuch as are, for the moſt part, the ordinary conſtituents of good or ill manners; the proprieties of language and dreſs; the routine of hours for meals, for buſineſs, or play; the place of diſtinction in company; or the choice of innocent and arbitrary rites; it is better that the members of ſociety ſhould be of one mind, though perhaps with little foundation of evidence or reaſon, than that every one ſhould, under pretence of thinking for himſelf, be at variance with his neighbour in matters of triffling account.

The authority of prevailing opinions makes at leaſt one bond of ſociety; and it is more fit that the people ſhould move together, though not in the beſt way that might be deviſed for them, than that they ſhould diſband and ſeparate into different ways, where no one might find, in the way he had choſen for himſelf, any thing to compenſate his ſeparation from the reſt of his kind.

The volume of nature is open for the information of mankind. If, in matters of importance, the ſagacious are well-informed, they may lead the opinions of others: And it is beneficently provided, that opinions once formed, and continued into habit, ſhould give to human affairs, in every country, and in every age, a certain ſtability or regularity, to which every perſon, in the choice of his own conduct, may accommodate himſelf.

As uniformity, or the coincidence of many, in a particular way of thinking, proceeds from communication, and is preſerved by habit, it were abſurd to employ any other method, to obtain or preſerve unanimity. The uſe of force in particular, to dictate opinion, is prepoſterous and ineffectual: It tends to give importance to trifles, to awaken ſuſpicions of a deſign to tyrannize, and arms the mind with obſtinacy or enthuſiaſm, to retain what was ſlightly adopted, to reject what is violently offered, and what, if the mind were left to itſelf, would be eaſily changed for any other apprehenſion of things that is more prevailing or common.

SECTION V.

Of Habit, as it affects the Inclinations of Men; and their Capacity of Enjoyment or Suffering.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. V.

IT is a well-known effect of habit, to reconcile men to what was once diſagreeable, or to diſable them from bearing what was once ſupportable: Thus a manner of life, in reſpect to diet, accommodation, or dreſs, to which we are at firſt repugnant, may, by uſe, be rendered agreeable, or even neceſſary, to our ſatisfaction. A perſon, accuſtomed to the life of a mariner, may become reconciled, and even attached, to the ſea. The converſe alſo is true. A perſon, long diſuſed to what was once agreeable, may loſe his reliſh for it, and even contract a diſlike to it. A perſon, long diſuſed to the exerciſes of the field and the open air, may feel himſelf diſtreſſed upon being obliged to go abroad.

It is commonly obſerved, that ſome articles, ſuch as ſpirituous liquors, and intoxicating drugs, tobacco, or opium, in which

which the vulgar, in different parts of the world, are moſt apt to debauch, are however, in the firſt uſe of them, unpleaſant or harſh to the taſte.

We have not any ſufficient reaſon to believe that men, of remote ages and nations, differ from one another otherwiſe than by habits acquired in a different manner of life: But how differently are they affected by external cauſes? and what a difference do they exhibit in their choice of food, accommodations, and pleaſures? The train-oil, or putrid fiſh, which is a feaſt in Labrador or Kamſchatka, would be little elſe than poiſon to an European ſtomach.

Or if men, in ſituations ſo remote from one another, ſhould be ſuppoſed to be of a different race; or to have incurred, from a difference of climate or ſituation, a change in the conſtruction of their organs; varieties, almoſt equally ſtriking, are obſervable, in the habits contracted in different ranks of life, by men of the ſame country and age. The peaſant is at eaſe in his cottage, under a roof, and in the midſt of accommodations, that would extremely diſcontent or diſpleaſe a perſon accuſtomed to other conveniencies.

In ſuch inſtances, no doubt, men are affected by their habit of thinking, no leſs than by the uſe of what they are accuſtomed to enjoy or to bear. In the ranks of ſociety, diſtinguiſhed by their reſpective accommodations, the inferior fondly aſpires to that which would raiſe him to the level of his ſuperior. *State* itſelf, or the appearance of greatneſs, is the charm that gives, to the apparatus of luxury, its principal value. Men, whoſe fortunes indulge them in the poſſeſſion of every convenience, and

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in the enjoyment of every pleaſure, can nevertheleſs forego them with eaſe, in the hardſhips of hunting or war; where the privation is not ſuppoſed to degrade, or any way to affect their ſtation. Such hardſhips, incurred in the capacity of a beggar, or ſuppoſed to proceed from want of means to live more at their eaſe, would occaſion extreme diſtreſs and dejection of mind. "The "tradeſman at Paris," ſays the author of the *Tableau de Paris*, "goes forth, on certain holidays, to purchaſe a fowl for his ſup- "per; and in this he conſults his vanity no leſs than his palate, "for he propoſes to fare like a gentleman." But ſuch effects of aſſociation in the mind, no leſs than the effects of a continued uſe in the bodily organs, are to be aſcribed to habit alone.

A taſk, which at firſt is ſevere and laborious, becomes eaſy, and even agreeable, through uſe. In youth, we are ever bent on pleaſure or amuſement; and at firſt averſe to the application or reſtraint of buſineſs: But, as there is ever ſome degree of active exertion, in what we term amuſement or paſtime, we often ſlide, by a habit of application, from the one to the other. The habit of buſineſs, when once it is acquired, is from experience, well known to ſupplant the taſte for amuſement; and to render us indifferent to what, before we had acquired ſuch habit, we conſidered as pleaſure.

In manhood, what does not engage ſome ſerious paſſion, and has no other recommendation but that of paſtime, appears inſipid or frivolous; and, when the powers of action have been employed in ſcenes of difficulty or moment, we cannot ſtoop to employ them in matters of a leſs ſerious, or even leſs hazardous, nature. The mariner has no enjoyment in the tranquillity of a life on ſhore; the warrior is not amuſed with concerns that do not

not affect his ſafety or his honour; the mathematician has no delight in problems which are too eaſily ſolved; nor the lawyer, in caſes that do not admit of diſpute.

The varieties of ſentiment, which men incur through habit, whether of aſſociation or mere practice and uſe, are evident in their judgement of manners and actions, no leſs than in their feeling of circumſtances that affect their own condition. What, in the manners of one country, is obliging and a favour, in another would be felt as an offence: As death is acceptable to the ſuperannuated huntſman in the neighbourhood of Hudſon's Bay, to beſtow it is reckoned a favour; and the office devolves on a ſon or a grandſon, who, being ſuppoſed to have received the higheſt obligations, are thus deſtined to repay it by the laſt act of piety to his parent.

In the contemplation of theſe, and ſuch varieties affecting the manners of nations, we are apt to enquire, whether any thing be ſo fixt in the nature of man, as that habit or cuſtom cannot change or remove it?

It is well known that external expreſſions, whether of moral ſentiment, or devotion, in the manners or religious obſervances of men, are, like the words of their language, mere arbitrary ſigns, which cuſtom accordingly may alter: But the ſentiments themſelves, whether of benevolence towards men, or devotion to God, retain their diſtinctive quality under all the variations of external expreſſion. If our queſtion, therefore, refer to qualities of the mind, and the diſtribution of enjoyment and ſuffering, from the good or ill qualities of which the mind is ſuſceptible, we may decidedly anſwer, in the affirmative, that the laws are fixed, and

that no continuance of ſituation, and no repetition of act, can alter them. Fear and malice, in all the ſhapes they aſſume, whether of jealouſy, envy, or revenge, are ever conſtituents of ſuffering or of miſery. Benevolence and fortitude are ever agreeable and conſtituent of happineſs. No continuance of practice can render fear or malice a ſtate of enjoyment: No habit of thinking can change their effects. Some, through the continued repetition of crimes, may have the conſcience *ſeared as with a hot iron*; and the wicked may have a momentary triumph in the gratification of malice; but no charm can change malice itſelf, or fear, into pleaſure: Nor does a happy temper of mind pall on the ſenſe, or loſe its effect by continued enjoyment.

If habit ſhould produce any change in theſe important reſpects, it muſt be by ſubſtituting one affection or temper of the mind for another, candour for malice, and courage for timidity, not by altering the effect while the ſame temper remains. Of ſuch changes men no doubt are ſuſceptible; and it is an object of ſupreme concern that they ſhould be made for the better, and not for the worſe.

Moſt men are ſenſible of many a change they have undergone in what they inclined to have, or were diſpoſed to do. There is a manner of life, in which they were once aukward, but to which they are now familiar; a taſk to which they were once forced, but to which they are now reconciled, and to which they proceed by a kind of ſpontaneous effort, and often without premeditation or intended exertion.

The ordinary progreſs by which a change of diſpoſition is effected

fected, may consist, either in a diminution of the reluctance which we may have originally had, or in a growing facility of repetition which ends in a sort of mechanical tendency of the active powers to renew their exertions, and an alacrity of mind to attempt what is performed with ease and success.

In such instances, we have yet to observe, and it is of sufficient importance to be treated in a separate section, that the acquired disposition has the advantage of being attended with a talent or acquired power also. Both taken together are, in some instances termed an art or a calling. The mechanic seems to acquire it in his hands; the orator, in his speech; the student in his quickness of apprehension, in the extent of his views, or in his method of conceiving the order of nature; and the wise man, in the possession of a resolute conduct, which no first inclination, on his own part, or casual appearance of things from abroad, can distract.

This is probably the most interesting fact that occurs in the history of man. By this law of his nature, he is intrusted to himself, as the clay is intrusted to the *hands of the potter*; and he may be formed by himself in the course of that life he adopts, as the vessel is formed by the other, for purposes of *honour* or *dishonour*.

It is not in vain, therefore, that man is endowed with a power of discerning what is amiss or defective in the actual state of his own inclinations or faculties. It is not in vain that he is qualified to apprehend a perfection far beyond his actual attainments. The one is not to him a fruitless topic of regret, nor the other an excitement to vain attempts. The small-

leſt efforts which they lead him to make, lay the foundations of habit, and point to the end of a progreſs in which he is deſtined, however ſlowly, to advance.

SECTION

SECTION VI.

Of the Effects of Habit in the Acquiſition of Strength and Power.

AS habit, next to mere will or choice, is the province in which man has moſt ample dominion over himſelf; and as, in chuſing what habits he ſhall acquire, he is in ſome meaſure the artificer of his own nature, as well as of his own fortune, it is proper to fix the attention ſeparately upon all the different reſults of it, notwithſtanding that they may have crowded together in every general view of the ſubject. It affects our opinions and conceptions of things, our enjoyments and ſufferings, our inclinations and paſſions; and it now merits a ſeparate conſideration, in what degree our powers are increaſed or diminiſhed, by virtue of the ſame law of our nature.

Acceſſions of power in us are ſometimes termed ſkill, and conſiſt in the knowledge of means that may be employed for the attainment of our end: They are alſo termed a ſleight or facility of performance; and are acquired by mere practice, without any increaſe of knowledge. The firſt is the reſult of ſcience;

the ſecond is the reſult of habit. And there are few arts or performances of moment, in which it is not requiſite that both ſhould be united.

A principal diſtinction of living and active natures, whether merely animal or rational, conſiſts in the increment of ſubſtance or of force they receive in the midſt of exertions, which, according to the analogy of mechanical attrition ought rather to weaken or deſtroy the parts in which they are made. Colliſions and frictions, which tear and wear a mechanical engine, do but add ſtrength and ſubſtance to the limbs of an animal in which ſimilar ſhocks and preſſures are ſuſtained. Whilſt the ſhoe is worn in treading the ground, the foot that treads without any covering, as well as the hand that is employed in hard labour, become callous and large.

This advantage, by which the animal frame is diſtinguiſhed, is, no doubt, as we have elſewhere obſerved, circumſcribed within certain bounds. Its exertions may be overſtrained; and the effect of exceſs is pernicious, no leſs than that of proper exerciſe is ſalutary. It is at the ſame time to be obſerved, that a meaſure of exertion which, if ſuddenly made, would overſtrain and impair the animal powers, may nevertheleſs be brought on by ſuch degrees, as may enable a perſon, in proceſs of time to make it with eaſe and ſafety: Inſomuch, that he who continues to exert his ſtrength in ſuch efforts as he is able to make, without overſtraining his organs, and who goes on to increaſe his efforts in proportion as his powers increaſe, may continue his progreſs far beyond what could at firſt have been expected. It is thus that perſons of different callings come to ſurpaſs the ordinary ſtrength of men, in the uſe of ſuch limbs as they

they have continual occaſion to employ. The porter may be known by the breadth of his ſhoulders, the ſeaman by the ſtrength of his arm, and the boxer by the general firmneſs and protuberance of all his muſcles.

In the intellectual nature of man, acquiſitions of power are made in a ſimilar manner, and no doubt, under ſimilar limitations. The mind may overſtrain its faculties; but, without exertion, they are ſcarcely known to exiſt; and, it is from proper exerciſe alone, they receive their improvements. Superior genius is obſerved to languiſh without its proper employment; and even to inferior degrees of genius, the taſk which was difficult, or at firſt appeared inſurmountable, may come, in the reſult of habit, to be accompliſhed with eaſe.

By continuing to attend, to obſerve, to reflect, and to recollect, we become attentive, obſervant, penetrating, and comprehenſive, in the treatment of ſubjects which at firſt ſeemed to eſcape our conception. Whoever can keep poſſeſſion of his mind and his faculties, in the midſt of difficulty or danger, will find his fortitude and his ability for conduct increaſed by the mere repetition of trying occaſions.

In ſtating the joint progreſs of inclination and ability in the reſult of habit, it merits obſervation, that, while the mind becomes reſolute in the purſuit of its objects, the occaſional paſſions of hope or fear, of joy or grief, to which that object under its different aſpects gave occaſion, appear to ſubſide or loſe of their force, even in the circumſtances to which they refer. The veteran becomes cool and deliberate in the midſt of occaſions that try his temper; he becomes at the ſame time far from indifferent,

rent, but reſolute and able in the conduct of affairs to which he has been long accuſtomed: He has an eaſy recourſe to the expedients in practice, or to the conſiderations in perſuaſion and argument, on which he himſelf has decided the part which he acts.

Thus, the paſſions abate of their perturbation and tumult, under a continuance of their occaſions; while the mind attains to a full poſſeſſion of its faculties, in diſcharging the functions, in aid of which the paſſions may appear at firſt to have been given. The novice ſeemed to require the ſpurs of hope or joy, the admonitions of fear or grief; but, under the effects of experience, theſe weakeners of the human mind fall off. By the veteran, a ſteady purpoſe is formed; and the moſt effectual meaſures are taken, even with apparent inſenſibilty, to the occaſion on which they are required. To this effect of repeated alarms or emotions in calming the temper, perhaps the philoſophical critic alludes, in placing tragedy, which is compoſed to move terror and ſorrow, among the remedies or correctors of theſe very paſſions.

SECTION

SECTION VII.

Of the Reſults of Habit in the General Hiſtory of the Human Species.

IN ſtating the diſtinction of man among the animals, we remarked the indefinite varieties which the human ſpecies exhibits, in reſpect to condition and manner of life. While other animals of a kind or ſpecies are uniform, men are greatly diverſified. Uniformity is the character of the one; variety of the other: Inſomuch that men, of different ages and nations, exhibit a diverſity, almoſt equivalent to that which takes place in the different kinds of other animals. What two animals in nature are more different in their manner of life, than the Greenlander, alone in his boat, launched upon the ſtormy ſea, in purſuit of the ſeal or other prey by which he ſubſiſts; and the wealthy citizen of London or Paris formed to the accommodations which wealth, and the multiplied inventions of art, have procured.

We have obſerved, that other animals have their reſpective inſtincts; directing them to the element in which they are fitted

to

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to reſide; directing them to the choice of materials, before they have any experience of the purpoſe for which they are to be uſed; and, directing them to the uſe of means before they have view to the end: and that, in the form preſcribed by nature, they uniformly proceed without any exerciſe of obſervation, or latitude of choice. They have their inſtincts of ferocity, of timidity, or mildneſs, as invariable as the ſhape of their bodies, or the ſtructure of their organs.

Man is deſtined to obſerve and to chuſe among the objects around him; to make a trial of different practices; and to abide by that which is moſt ſuited to his circumſtances, or to the ſituation in which he is placed. Even his own character, we have obſerved, takes a ſtamp from his ſituation and the manner of life in which he is engaged: He ſeems to carry in his nature, a principle of ductility or pliancy, which is with-held from the other animals: But, that we may not miſtake the effect or the extent of this principle, it is proper to recollect, that its exiſtence is inferred from the varieties exhibited by men of different nations, ages, and ranks of life, not from the facility with which any one individual can turn himſelf into different ſhapes, whether with reſpect to his opinions, his inclinations, or faculties. In reſpect to theſe, in every particular inſtance, there are habits which ſerve to fix the manners of men, no leſs than inſtinct is obſerved to fix the practice of other animals.

If this were not the caſe, human life would be a ſcene of inextricable confuſion and uncertainty. One perſon could not know whether another, in the tranſactions of life had any determinate rule of conduct; or whether a party, in any tranſaction, would abide by the ſequel even of what he himſelf had propoſed.

Were intelligent beings ſo anomalous in their diſpoſition and conduct, the conſequence would be no leſs perplexing, in the rational ſyſtem, than the want of any uniform law, upon which to proceed, would be in the practice of mechanical arts; and would equally fruſtrate every exertion of prudence or foreſight in the conduct of life.

Although man is entruſted by nature with a ſuperior latitude of obſervation and choice, yet he is not left, upon the return of every occaſion, to the mere guidance of an obſervation he is then to make. The meaſures, which his experience in former times has led him to employ, recur to his mind on every ſubſequent occaſion of the ſame kind; and, even if he ſhould be off his guard, or have forgot the grounds of his former proceeding, mere habit will lead him to repeat the ſame choice, and to perform the ſame action. This bias to retain the form he has once adopted, though without any original propenſity, is with him nearly of the ſame effect with the inſtincts of other animals.

Were it not for this effect of habit, we ſhould have continual occaſion to complain, that no meaſures could be taken upon mere expectation, nor any reliance had on a conduct which were ſo ſubject to fluctuation, and without any determinate rule.

Such complaints indeed we have ſometimes occaſion to make, but the contrary complaint of obſtinacy, in the retention of prejudice and habit, tends to ſhew that man is not left altogether expoſed to the defects of either extreme: That, while his natural propenſities and acquired habits tend to mark out the line of his conduct, his will is yet free; and whatever direction he may have taken, he is impowered to change it upon the obſervation of another that is more for his good. As he was qualified at firſt to

chuſe his practice, at the hazard of acquiring a habit whether proper or improper; ſo he may judge alſo of the habit he has acquired; and, among thoſe he approves or condemns, chuſe which he would retain, or which he would counteract and correct by an oppoſite practice.

But while we thus glory in the prerogatives of intelligence and freedom of choice, we muſt rejoice alſo in a circumſtance, which appears to give fixed poſſeſſion of the attainments we may have made, and which will reward the labours we undergo in forcing any ſalutary practice, by giving us the ready and ſpontaneous uſe of it when acquired.

The force of habit, it is true, in the ordinary courſe of human life, may fix a diſpoſition to evil no leſs than to that which is good; but we may flatter ourſelves in the notion, that good, on the whole muſt prevail. It is the tendency of experience to detect every falſe opinion, and, by this means, to narrow the ſcope of aberration and miſtake. The experience of evil tends for the future to inculcate a better choice; and, by teaching mankind effectually what they ought not to do, limit them at laſt to what ought to be done, or put them in the train of a wiſer or more happy conduct. When every rock or ſhoal is marked with its beacon, the ſafe channel or paſſage alone will remain to be taken by the moſt heedleſs mariner.

SECTION VIII.

Of Ambition, or the Deſire of ſomething higher than is poſſeſſed at preſent *.

DIFFERENT circumſtances in the condition of man render him ſuſceptible of various attainments, or contribute to forward his progreſs; and, on this account, were enumerated among the principles of progreſſion in human nature: But *Ambition*, in the ſenſe given to it as above, is the ſpecific principle of advancement uniformly directed to this end, and not ſatiated with any given meaſure of gratification: It continues to urge its purſuit after the higheſt attainments are made, no leſs than it did when fartheſt removed from its end.

This paſſion is obſerved to operate in the concerns of mere animal life; in the proviſion of ſubſiſtence, of accommodation, and ornament; in the progreſs of ſociety, and in the choice of its inſtitutions. It operates in the attainments of knowledge, and in every aim at perfection, whether in executing works of genius, or in the honourable part which the worthy deſire to ſupport through life.

* Vide JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

Perſonal qualities, however, we muſt ſuppoſe to be its genuine object, as theſe are the real conſtituents of eminence or true elevation: And perfection in the nature of man being never actually attained, will account for the peculiar form of this inſtinct, which, even where it miſtakes its object, and ſeems to find a limit beyond which it is vain to urge its purſuits, as in the proviſion to be made for the accommodation of animal life; yet even in this article, it ever aims at ſomewhat higher and better than is poſſeſt at preſent. The miſer, after he has got all he can uſe, continues to hoard without end what he is determined not to uſe.

Ambition is, upon this account alſo peculiar to man. He alone, among the animals, ſeems to conceive the diſtinction of perfection and defect, and refers to it in many of his moſt vehement ſentiments and paſſions, ſuch as eſteem, admiration, reſpect, veneration, and love, on the one hand; contempt, deteſtation, and ſcorn, on the other.

In reſpect to whatever object theſe ſentiments are felt, we may preſume that the diſtinction of excellence and defect is either realized in the object itſelf, as it is in the character and diſpoſition of the human mind; or, if the object be in its own nature indifferent, as in compoſitions of mere matter and form, we may ſuppoſe that the notion of perfection or defect is aſſociated with it, in the mind, and gives occaſion to the oppoſite ſentiments of admiration or diſguſt with which the object is received or beheld.

There is a real excellence or defect in all the examples of perſonal merit or demerit, in all the examples of juſtice or injuſtice, in the manners or inſtitutions of men, and in the degrees in which

which minds are poſſeſſed of genius, or defective in point of ability.

Excellence and defect, on the other hand, are aſſociated merely in our conception, with circumſtances of birth or fortune, inſomuch that men entertain eſteem for perſons of one condition, and contempt for thoſe of another, upon the mere difference of eſtate or of family. Whole nations admire the poſſeſſion of wealth in themſelves, and take rank from the accommodations they poſſeſs. Not ſatisfied with the gratifications which riches afford, they boaſt of them as matters of eſtimation alſo, and aſſume a rate of elevation, which the real degradation of manners and ſpirit but too often belies.

The national purſuit of ſuch objects, indeed, are urged to indefinite extent, rather by the intereſt and ambition of individuals than by the policy of ſtates; and communities become rich, not from the impulſe of public inſtitutions, but rather from the ambition of their ſeparate members, who wiſh to provide for themſelves what is conſidered as a conſtituent of ſuperiority in the diſtinctions of rank.

Such is the operation of ambition in the purſuits of wealth. But, as excellence is more frequently aſſociated with power than with riches, ambition is commonly more underſtood to be a love of dominion, than of wealth. Craſſus was eminent for riches, but was reckoned ambitious ſo far only as he made wealth ſubſervient to power. Ambition is reckoned the characteriſtic of Cæſar; becauſe, although indifferent to riches, he aimed at dominion over his equals, and could not be ſatisfied with any condition below that of ſovereign of his country. Sylla, though not correct in his notion of greatneſs, ſtill roſe above this idea, and contemned

temned the ſovereignty among fools as much as he would have done their applauſe or eſteem.

The circumſtances which lead the mind, in forming theſe aſſociations, whether analogy or prevailing opinion, are various; and power is certainly more eaſily miſtaken for comparative elevation, than either family or wealth. Power is even ſometimes founded on the beſt qualities of human nature,—wiſdom, goodneſs, and fortitude; but, being obtained alſo by cunning or brutal force, being always diſtinguiſhable from merit or real worth, it may lead to the moſt pernicious and fatal effects; or, as it implies ſubjection in ſome, as well as dominion in others, it is in human life a principal ſource of contention, war, and injuſtice.

Apart from the ruinous effects of violence in the purſuits of dominion, it is ungenerous to deſire that others ſhould be at our mercy, or ſubject to our caprice; and this deſire is ſure to make itſelf enemies, and to meet with reſiſtance, whether from competitors in the ſame line of pretenſion, or from others who diſdain ſubjection, and contend for their rights.

If Cato and Antoninus were ambitious in aiming at the higheſt meaſures of perſonal worth, or, as it is deſcribed in the Cæſars of Julian, in aſpiring to a reſemblance of the ſupreme God; how vile muſt the ambition of Cæſar appear, in wiſhing only to reduce his fellow-citizens and equals, to hold their lives and fortunes at his diſcretion.

As we may hope, that intelligent beings, ſooner or later, in the preſent or ſome future ſtate, are deſtined to perceive the true path of ambition; this principle, we acknowledge, is, beneficently, made one of the moſt powerful motives of action in human

nature. Even in its preſent, too frequently erroneous courſe, it ſerves to engage men in never-ceaſing purſuits and exertions; which, though aimed at a miſtaken end, nevertheleſs occaſion the improvement of faculties, ſo intenſely applied: Inſomuch that we may venture to ſtate this paſſion, even in its moſt ſignal aberrations, as a material principle in the progreſſive nature of man; operating in all his purſuits; and denying him, even in ſearch of a ſupply of his animal wants, that repoſe which nature, as often as an appetite is fully gratified, ſeems to allow throughout every other part of the animal kingdom.

Man is born naked, defenceleſs, and expoſed to greater hardſhips than any other ſpecies of animal; and though he is qualified to drag a precarious exiſtence under theſe diſadvantages, yet as we find him, in the ſituation of his greateſt defect, urged by motives to ſupply it, no way ſhort of neceſſity, ſo we find him, by a continued application of this motive, which we term ambition, ſtill urged to proceed in every ſubſequent ſtate of his progreſs.

His ſociety, alſo, prior to any manner of political eſtabliſhment, we may imagine expoſed to extreme diſorder; and there, alſo, we may fancy the ſpur of neceſſity no leſs applied than in the urgency of his mere animal wants. From theſe motives, accordingly, we admit the arts of human life, whether commercial or political, to have originated, and ſuppoſe that the conſideration of neceſſity muſt have operated prior to that of convenience, and both prior to the love of mere decoration and ornament.

The wants of men, indeed, are of different kinds, and may be unequally urgent; but the movements, performed for the ſupply of very different wants, appear to be ſimultaneous, and bring at once

once into practice the rudiments of every art, without any ſuch order as we might ſuppoſe to ariſe from their comparative degrees of importance, or the urgency of occaſions on which they are practiſed.

The convenient and ornamental in their ſeveral forms, however rude, are ſtudied in the ſame age with the neceſſary; and the ſame perſon, who ſubſiſts from meal to meal on the precarious returns of the chace, is, in the intervals of his neceſſity, no leſs ſtudious of ornament in his perſon, his dreſs, and the fabric of his habitation, his weapons, or arms, than he was earneſt in procuring his food. He ſtudies the diſtinction of ingenious thought and ardent emotion in the ſong which he recites, or in the talk which he holds in the aſſembly of his tribe: He conceives an honour to be purſued, and a dignity of character to be preſerved, in which his ambition is not ſurpaſſed, even by thoſe who are moſt effectually relieved from the diſtractions that attend the inferior cares and neceſſities of animal life.

Without meaning, therefore, in any degree to inſinuate, that the purſuits of external accommodation, or the rudiments of commercial arts, had a priority in the order of time, to thoſe of political inſtitution or mental attainment; we may ſeparate theſe particulars, and place them in the order that appears moſt convenient for our own diſcuſſion: Or beginning with commercial arts, we may proceed to conſider the political occupations of men, before we ſtate the mental attainments which mankind are actually making, whilſt they are engaged in thoſe other purſuits.

The human mind, in whatever manner it be employed, if its faculties are brought into exerciſe, ever receives ſome increment of

power and ſome modification of habit: ſo that, without intending to operate upon itſelf, it nevertheleſs partakes of the effect that is produced, and receives an addition to the ſtock of perſonal qualities in the midſt of attentions that were beſtowed on a different ſubject.

Such in general is the fortune of nations.—They do not propoſe to improve the character of their people in point of wiſdom or virtue; but the people, nevertheleſs, receive inſtruction and habits of civilization, in the midſt of labours beſtowed in procuring their ſubſiſtence, accommodation, or ſafety.

SECTION IX.

Of the Commercial Arts.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. IX.

THESE arts, it has been obſerved, originate in the wants and neceſſities of animal life. They are continued, multiplied, and extended to ſupply a continued or increaſing conſumption, and to gratify multiplied and accumulating wants: They terminate in the acquiſition of wealth, accommodation, and ornament.

It has been obſerved alſo, that man's original wants are more numerous, and his ſupply more ſcanty, than thoſe of any other animal; and the propriety of this condition, in the caſe of a being qualified to provide for himſelf, and whoſe progreſs depends on the exerciſe of his faculties, has alſo been ſtated. With reſpect to him, the earth being comparatively ſterile, or unſtocked with ſpontaneous productions fit for his nouriſhment, or with animals fit for his ſervice; his ſkill and his labour are immediately required to ſelect and to cultivate the uſeful plant, to breed the ſerviceable animal, and to remove from his way, the uſeleſs or the pernicious of either kind.

What the earth is made by culture to produce, is yet rude, until it be fabricated, and receive a new form from the hand of this artiſt. Even this hand, though the moſt accompliſhed organ of all thoſe with which any animal is furniſhed, is not a ſufficient inſtrument for all the purpoſes of art, until it be furniſhed with a ſupplement in various engines and tools.

The ſtores, out of which man is to ſelect the materials of art, are diſperſed on the earth, and often concealed at great depths below its ſurface. A mixture of order, and of apparent diſorder in the diſtribution of theſe materials, ſerves to encourage his hopes, and to protract his labours in the ſearch of them.

Veins of metal are ſeen to ſtain the clefts of rocks; and ſtrata of uſeful materials, by their oblique poſition interſecting the ſurface of the earth, give marks of their preſence under ground; but the miner muſt dig to obtain them, and the mineraliſt has many operations to perform, before his material can go into the hands of the artiſt, who is to apply it to the ſeveral purpoſes of human life.

The liſt of articles that engage the attention of man is not limited to the mere ſupply of his neceſſities, whether in point of ſubſiſtence or ſafety: his views extend to decoration and ornament, as well as to uſe and convenience; nor is ornament leſs an original want of his nature than either ſhelter or food. The ſavage, no leſs than the poliſhed citizen, affects decoration in his dreſs, in the fabric of his arms, and in the apparatus of his perſon.

Although man, therefore, when contraſted with the other animals, labours under ſome apparent comparative defects; yet his ſuperior faculties, employed to ſupply theſe defects, ſoon raiſe him to a ſtate not only of equality, but of advantage greatly ſuperior to theirs.

Though ſeemingly preſt by neceſſity, his movements at firſt are ſlow, until he receive an additional impulſe as he taſtes the ſweets of ſupply; they are farther accelerated in proportion as he becomes furniſhed with tools, and learns to diſtribute the taſks of men in ſociety to ſuit the varieties of their diſpoſition and genius: Ever buſy, but never at the end of his wiſhes; when fartheſt advanced, he is only in the way to complete his attainments, but never entirely ſatisfied with what he has done.

Conſidering the ſupply of neceſſity, in every ſociety, as a primary concern of the national councils, we are apt to place it among the objects of ſtate; and to think that the bleſſing of plenty muſt depend on the wiſdom of thoſe who govern, or who act for the community. His own intereſt, however, is too much the concern of every individual, to be delegated or entruſted into any other hands than his own. It requires, care, induſtry, and ſkill, which are the virtues of private ſtation; not ſuperior genius, fortitude, liberality, and elevation of mind,—the virtues of thoſe who are to rule the world.

The commercial arts, therefore, are properly the diſtinctive purſuit or concern of individuals, and are beſt conducted on motives of ſeparate intereſt and private advancement. The rich affect a ſuperiority in the poſſeſſion of wealth; and the poor, to eſcape

ſcape from the ſtate of meanneſs into which they have fallen, ſtrain every nerve to become rich. Upon this motive the trader continues to labour, even after his neceſſities are provided for, and after his wants might have ſuffered him to reſt.

This motive continues to operate in every ſituation, at which mankind arrive in the progreſs of arts; or when it ceaſes to operate in the mind of one perſon it is ſtill active in the mind of ſome other, who has the ſame object of private gain to purſue. Families, who have long occupied the higheſt places in the ranks of ſociety, alarmed at the intruſion of thoſe who would partake in their ſtate, endeavour to ſet a bar in the way of more recent pretenſions, by contending for birth as neceſſary to conſtitute rank. And we may obſerve, by the way, that it is perhaps fortunate for mankind that any thing is deviſed to prevent eſtimation from becoming the appendage of mere riches alone.

Perſons born on a certain elevation, if diſpoſed to worthy purſuits, are more likely to receive impreſſions and to entertain ſentiments becoming their ſtation, than they who have recently arrived at their ſuppoſed diſtinction by ſordid or mercenary arts.

Mere wealth has no natural connection with merit; and, being conceived as a ſubject of eſtimation, is likely to inſpire that aukward and often ridiculous, if not odious preſumption, which forms the character of thoſe who are ſaid to be purſe-proud.

Commerce conſiſts in the exchange of commodities, and is highly expedient, ſo far as perſons, in conſequence of various purſuits and advantages, have mutual redundancies to be diſpoſed of, and mutual wants to be ſupplied.

Men

Men are made to diverſify their employments, not only by a variety of diſpoſition and faculty, but by a variety in the occaſions alſo which they have to employ them.

The habitable world is diverſified in every place; it is diverſified in reſpect to climate, to the form of its ſurface, and to the nature of the ſoil. On the hill or the plain, the inland or the coaſt, the inhabitant is furniſhed with ſeparate materials for manufacture, or a ſeparate proviſion to ſupply the exigencies of human life.

In every ſituation, there is or may be procured a ſuperfluity of ſome one or more commodities, while there is, or may be a deficiency in others: But, that the ſuperabundant bounty of nature, in any one article, may be turned to account, it is neceſſary that the ſuperfluous articles ſhould be exchanged for ſomething elſe that is wanting.

Where the ſurplus and want, in the ſituation of different perſons are mutual, the expedient of exchange required to accommodate the parties, though above the comprehenſion of any other animal, is perfectly obvious to man. He preſents what he has to ſpare of one kind, as an inducement for his neighbour to ſupply in return what he wants of another; and, as the accommodation in many caſes may be mutual, the practice of commerce cannot fail to proceed.

It appears to be a condition in the order eſtabliſhed throughout this habitable globe, that no lot is ſo completely made up, as not to admit of acceſſion by ſupply from abroad, and none ſo deficient

cient as not to have ſomewhat to ſpare. There is no human talent ſo far equal to all the purpoſes of life, as not to have occaſion for co-operation or aid; and no perſon is ſo far inſignificant, as not to be able, in ſome particular, to contribute to the welfare of others.

Every place has its aſſortment of goods for import and export; and men are the mutual producers and conſumers of the ſeveral commodities that make up the aggregate ſum of wealth. The manufacturer of China works for the huntſman of Siberia or Labrador. The fiſh and the train oil of Greenland are carried in exchange for the wines of Andaluſia and the gold of Peru.

The citizen of London or Paris is enabled, at a meal, to furniſh his table with productions that have been ſupplied from climates and ſoils the moſt remote from each other. And we may fancy it to be the object of commerce, or the effect it might ſerve to produce, were its efforts completely ſucceſsful, to level the conditions of men in all the variety of their ſituations; to compenſate original defects by adventitious ſupplies; and to give every commodity a current, from the place at which it is ſuperfluous or abounds, to any other at which it is wanted.

Here, indeed, is a lofty pretenſion of human art; and the effect is actually ſuch as to raiſe mankind, in the ages of commerce far above the level of that condition, which they held in a more early ſtate of their progreſs: But, when we obſerve them in either extreme of ſimplicity and rudeneſs, or of accommodation and art, or under any of the gradations which lead from the one to the other, they ſeem to be equally ſatisfied, or rather equally diſ-

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ſatisfied in all the varieties through which they are known to paſs. They have their different habits that reconcile them equally to the ſtate in which they are accuſtomed to live; and whatever that ſtate may be, they have their feeling of wants, or their deſire of ſomething better than the preſent, which ever prompts them to urge on their way; inſomuch that, poſſibly, the ſum of gratification or diſappointment may be equal in all the different ſituations of men.

On this ſuppoſition it may be aſked, what does the ſpecies gain in the reſult of commercial arts, and at the expence of ſo much invention and labour.

This problem is likely to occur only among ſpeculative men in ſome advanced ſtate of the very arts, of which the value is brought into queſtion, and the merits, when tried before ſuch judges, may be pronounced very different from what they would be found before a different tribunal. The judge, in every inſtance conſulting his own habits, would pronounce on the abſurdity or the rectitude of manners, and conſider as a good or as an evil, the privation or ſuperfluity of conveniencies to which he himſelf is, or is not, accuſtomed.

But if men, in every age ſhould be thus ready to pronounce in favour of their own condition, and to look upon ſituations, very different from their own, with diſlike or contempt; the queſtion would ſtill return, and might have ſome appearance of difficulty with thoſe who can diveſt themſelves of prejudice, or who can allow that contentment is ſtill of equal value in whatever condition it be attained.

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On this ſubject, however, there are fixed principles to which we may recur, and on which, without being under a neceſſity to prove, that the meaſure of human enjoyment is increaſed in any particular age of commerce, we may nevertheleſs juſtify the efforts of mankind to multiply their accommodations, and to increaſe their ſtores.

Firſt of all, we may obſerve, that progreſs itſelf is congenial to the nature of man; that whatever checks it, is diſtreſs and oppreſſion; whatever promotes it, is proſperity and freedom: That, although the ſum of attainments, when actually made, ſhould become familiar, ſhould pall on the ſenſe, and become to the poſſeſſor rather a neceſſary of which he cannot bear to be deprived, than a ſource of any poſitive enjoyment; yet the ſuppoſed increaſe of convenience in every ſucceſſive ſtep may be agreeably felt; and progreſs itſelf, to the ſucceſſion of ages, form a ſeries of gratifications and pleaſures, which in any fixed or permanent ſtation could not be obtained.

Even, if we ſhould thus be diſpoſed to give up any ſuperiority of enjoyment, derivable from one ſet of perſonal accommodations, in preference to another; the invention and practice of arts relating to ſuch accommodations, have unqueſtionable value, in the exerciſe they furniſh to the active nature and intelligent power of man.

Such is the nature of man, the party concerned in this queſtion, that, although by erecting the fabric of commercial arts, and, by accumulating the wealth which they beſtow, he ſhould not, in the mere circumſtance of fortune, find the ſum of his enjoyments in-

creaſed; yet, it would not follow, that he has laboured in vain, whether in cultivating the ground, or in working the materials which the Author of nature has ſupplied for his uſe. It is, indeed, moſtly in ſome active exertions that his happineſs conſiſts; and his attainments never can form a condition in which he may not be equally active, and in which, if willing, he may not procure felicity, from the ſame ſource of juſt or beneficent occupation and exerciſe; a ſource which is ever open to him, if not in the act of procuring the advantages of ſituation, at leaſt in that of employing them for his own, and the good of his fellow creatures.

We are ever ready to own that labour is preſcribed to man; that he is deſtined to earn every bleſſing by the ſweat of his brow, by the labour of his hands, or the exertion of his mind: But we do not always conceive, that theſe labours and exertions are themſelves of principal value, and to be reckoned among the foremoſt bleſſings to which human nature is competent; that mere induſtry is a bleſſing apart from the wealth it procures; and that the exerciſes of a cultivated mind, though conſidered as means for the attainment of an external end, are themſelves of more value than any ſuch end whatever.

In the progreſs or reſult of commercial arts, employments are adapted to all the varieties of diſpoſition, capacity, or genius. Separate departments are opened for the different deſcriptions of men; taſks of labour for the ſtrong, of addreſs and ſleight of hand for thoſe who are defective in ſtrength; taſks of ſkill for the inventive and knowing; laws of nature to be inveſtigated, and obſcurities to be cleared up, by the ingenious and comprehenſive.

The object of commerce in every department is profit; but ſcience

ſcience itſelf, by the reward for diſcoveries which trade can afford, may become a lucrative purſuit.

In the ſeveral departments into which the buſineſs of trade is diſtributed, it may be obſerved, that variety of talents being required, the faculties of mind are unequally cultivated. While invention employs the ſuperior genius, and while the direction of a work requires the enlargement of knowledge; the execution of a ſingle part conſiſting, perhaps, in a mere movement of the hand or the foot, ſuperſedes every act of thought or exerciſe of ingenuity: Inſomuch, that the human faculties ſeem to be as much ſuppreſſed in the one caſe, as they are raiſed and invigorated in the other: But as the lot of man is never free of inconvenience, ſo the inconvenience he ſuffers is never deprived of all compenſation.

The ſavage who performs, however rudely, the ſeveral taſks of human life for himſelf, though greatly inferior to the ſcientific performer, may in fact be as much ſuperior to the mere labourer, who is no more than a tool in the hand of a maſter artiſt. There is a calling in the rude ages of mankind, in which every individual is bred from his infancy, and of which he cannot remit the practice, without extreme danger; that of penetration and ſagacity, reſpecting the friend with whom he is to co-operate, or the enemy of whom he is to beware. This, in the laſt, as well as in the firſt ſtate of mankind, is the ſtandard of eſtimation relating to them; and, while we endeavour to ſpecify the advantage gained by commercial arts, it were mere ignorance to reſt the comparative merits of men entirely on this foundation.

The ſucceſs of commercial arts, divided into parts, requires a certain order to be preſerved by thoſe who practiſe them, and implies a certain ſecurity of the perſon and property, to which we give the name of civilization, although this diſtinction, both in the nature of the thing, and derivation of the word, belongs rather to the effects of law and political eſtabliſhment, on the forms of ſociety, than to any ſtate merely of lucrative poſſeſſion or wealth.

Civilization has been conſpicuous in nations, who made little progreſs in commerce, or the arts on which it proceeds. The Romans had formed a very accompliſhed republic, and exhibited many an illuſtrious character; whilſt, in reſpect to family eſtate, and manner of life, they were nearly in the condition of peaſants and huſbandmen. The policy of Sparta aroſe from a principle directly oppoſed to the maxims of trade, and went to reſtrain and to ſuſpend the commercial arts in all their effects. The nation would not have a citizen admired for his wealth, or the equipage of his perſon: They would not have him occupied with the care of his ſubſiſtence or private fortune; and, to procure this exemption for free men, they ſo far diſpenſed with the laws of nature and humanity, as to devote, in the capacity of ſlaves, a particular race of men to perform the labours neceſſary for the maintainance of the people: They would leave the citizen nothing to care for but his own perſonal character and the ſervice of his country. And they ſucceeded ſo far, that, without riches, in the midſt of nations who were admirers of wealth, and in the moſt cultivated part of the earth, they enjoyed a degree of conſideration, ſuperior to that which the luſtre even of literary genius and the fine arts, as well as commerce, beſtowed on their neighbours.

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In the more ordinary ſtate of nations, however, the arts of ſubſiſtence and accommodation conſtitute a material part, in the exerciſe of thoſe faculties in which human nature is deſtined to improve. Property calls for the ſecurity of law; and prudence requires the trader to be fair in his dealing. Virtue, though not as in Sparta, made the principal object of policy, will not fail, in every department of human affairs, to make its own value to be felt: It cannot be diſpenſed with in any ſociety; nor is that perſon altogether contemptible, who is fair in his dealings only, that he may be rich. The merchant is enterpriſing in his trade; but, as war expoſes him to be plundered, or at leaſt to be diſturbed, interrupted, or fruſtrated of his gains, he is inclined to peace; and ought to be mild in his tranſactions with other nations. Theſe expectations indeed, like many others relating to the influence of circumſtances on the will of man, are frequently fruſtrated. The Carthaginians had the intereſt of traders, in the peace of mankind; were themſelves unwarlike, and entruſted their military ſervice to foreign mercenaries; but, in their treatment of captives, or vanquiſhed enemies, were nowiſe more mild or humane than other nations, their contemporaries, of the antient world. They were even noted for cruelty in their ſuperſtition, and in the ſyſtem of their penal laws. Human ſacrifices were a part of their rites, and the croſs an ordinary engine of puniſhment, for every gradation of guilt.

In the progreſs, as well as in the reſult of commercial arts, mankind are enabled to ſubſiſt in growing numbers; learn to ply their reſources, and to wield their ſtrength, with ſuperior eaſe and ſucceſs. The reſources of wealth are increaſing, and, joined to the advantage of a growing energy and ſkill in the uſe

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of them, conſtitute to nations, who unite the public virtues with commerce, an acceſſion of ſecurity and power.

The object of commerce is wealth: But, in this part of the hiſtory of man, nevertheleſs, is evident, what in reality will be found applicable to many other of its parts, namely, that the end, he propoſes to himſelf, is not to him of ſo much value as the purſuit in which it engages him, or the means he is led to employ, in the conduct of that purſuit.

The end of commercial art is, ſuch a ſupply of accommodation and pleaſure, as wealth may procure: But, ſuppoſe this end to be obtained at once, and without any effort; ſuppoſe the ſavage to become ſuddenly rich, to be lodged in a palace, and furniſhed with all the accommodations or means of enjoyment, which an ample eſtate or revenue can beſtow; he would either have no permanent reliſh for ſuch poſſeſſions, or, not knowing how to uſe or enjoy them, would exhibit effects of groſs and ungovernable paſſion, and a brutality of nature, from which, amidſt the wants and hardſhips of his own ſituation, he is in a great meaſure reſtrained.

Such we may pronounce to be the effect of mere wealth, unattended with education, or apart from the virtues of induſtry, ſobriety, and frugality, which nature has preſcribed as the means of attainment: But, in the uſe of theſe means, the induſtrious are furniſhed with exerciſes improving to the genius of man; have occaſion to experience, and to return the offices of beneficence and friendſhip; are led to the ſtudy of juſtice, ſobriety, and good order, in the conduct of life. And, thus, in the very progreſs with which they arrive at the poſſeſſion of wealth, form

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to themſelves a taſte of enjoyment, and decency of manners, equivalent to a conviction that happineſs does not conſiſt in the meaſure of fortune, but in its proper uſe; a condition, indeed, upon which happineſs depends, no leſs in the higheſt, than in the loweſt, or any intermediate ſtate into which nations are led in the purſuit of theſe, or any other arts.

SECTION

SECTION X.

Of the Political Arts.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. X.

AS the commercial arts originate in the neceſſities of man's animal nature, the arts which may be termed political, originate in the wants and defects of inſtinctive ſociety.

Animals, which are led by their inſtincts to form themſelves into troops or ſwarms, and to combine their labours for ſubſiſtence, accommodation, or ſafety, are likewiſe led, by the ſame power of inſtinct, to ſome general polity or arrangement of parts, for the purpoſe of nature: An infant ſwarm of bees will follow the queen, or mother of the hive, and wherever ſhe ſettles will take their abode. The human ſpecies alſo by the original inſtinct or deſtination of nature not only find themſelves formed into troops or companies, but ranged alſo in a way to be directed or governed in numbers together. The will, of one is often a principle of action to many. The parent leads his infant child. The courageous and the able take an aſcendant over the timorous and

weak. And not only in the family there is a ſubordination of perſonal quality of ſex and age; but, in every troop or company, ſome are qualified and diſpoſed to lead; others willing to be led. Inequalities of ſtrength, whether of mind or body, conſtitute a relation of dependance and power, forming a ſpecies of government, which we may term inſtinctive, becauſe it is prior to any concerted deſign or inſtitution on the part of thoſe concerned.

The courageous take a ſtation in danger, under which the timid are fain to accept of protection. The wiſe point out the way to an end, which every one would gladly attain; and for the attainment of which perſons of inferior ability ſubmit to be governed by thoſe of a ſtronger mind.

We muſt not, however, confound the effect of theſe inequalities in forming a ſpecies of actual government, with any ſuppoſed right to command in one, or obligation to obey in another. The firſt perſon you meet in the ſtreets, upon a difficulty that occurs in the way, may win your confidence, and incline you to receive his direction; but this does not amount to a right in him to command you, nor to an obligation on you to obey him. This right and obligation, as we ſhall have occaſion to obſerve, is founded in convention alone; and can be actually traced to this foundation, wherever ſuch rights and obligations are really eſtabliſhed.

Nor is it neceſſary, ſurely, in this place, to combat the arguments of thoſe, who, in judging of political eſtabliſhments, recur to the firſt ſuggeſtions of nature, as the model of what mankind are forever bound to retain. Men are deſtined to improve on their lot and on their firſt inventions, and no more acquieſce in the firſt

defective forms of ſociety, than they do in the firſt rudiments of other accommodation, or in the firſt practice of any mechanical art.

We ſtate the condition of rude ſociety, as the material on which the genius of man is to work, not as a finiſhed production, with which he is forever to remain contented. In this ſtate we obſerve that there are, whether from nature or fortune, caſual diverſities in the ſtate of the parties, that produce a diſparity of rank: That ſuch diſparity ſuggeſts the claims of prerogative to perſons of one condition; inſpires others with deference; or, if prerogative be carried beyond certain limits, an alarm, on the ſubject of privileges, is taken by thoſe over whom it is claimed.

If, in fixing the date of ſubordination, we take our accounts from antient tradition and record alone, we muſt aſſume, that in the rudeſt times it was known. For, in every inſtance, we read of tranſactions that imply the exaltation of particular perſons above the ordinary level; we read of *patricians*, or *nobles*, who roſe above the body of the *people*; and *princes* or *kings*, who roſe above the *nobles*, and who were the *heads* or *leaders* of their ſeveral communities.

The firſt ſubjects of hiſtory are the wars of ſuch leaders at the head of their followers; or the conteſts into which parties were engaged on the ſubject of their reſpective pretenſions, whether prerogative or privilege.

Even, if we ſhould ſuppoſe, as is probable, that the record of hiſtory, in ſuch inſtances, is not correct, or does not reach far enough

nough back, to make us acquainted with the earlieſt ſtate of mankind; and that the condition of ſavage nations known in our own times, is a better ſpecimen of primeval ſociety: Yet, even amongſt them, alſo, there is a diſtinction of perſons, a leader and followers, a ſelect council of the nation, and a body of the people; diſtinctions in which the foundations are actually laid for all the varieties of perſonal eſtimation and family diſtinction.

When diſparities of rank are admitted among the parties which compoſe a ſociety, what Tacitus relates of the ancient Germans may be ſafely aſſumed as ſo many laws of nature, by which men are led before they have planned an eſtabliſhment: That, *in matters of ſmall moment, the chiefs deliberate; but, on great occaſions, all take a part: That royalty is attached to birth, and military command to valour* *.

In the reſult of this natural or inſtinctive courſe of things, ſmall ſtates are inclined to democracy, becauſe a great proportion of the people is eaſily and frequently aſſembled. In ſtates of greater extent, the nobles, or ſelect claſs of the people, lay hold of the government, becauſe they have leiſure to attend to it, and are eaſily convened.

In ſocieties of every deſcription, as often as men have conſulted and have occaſion to act in a body, there is required ſome undivided authority, of which the firſt and ſimpleſt form is that which is conceived in the perſon of a king or a prince.

* De minoribus rebus principes, de majoribus omnes conſultant. Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute ſumant.

In arriving, therefore, even at the ſtate of a principality, in ſome rude form, there does not appear any concerted deſign to eſtabliſh a government. Nobility may take its riſe from the diſtinction of perſonal qualities; from great ability and courage; from the luſtre of great actions; and from the influence of extenſive poſſeſſions. What thus ſerves to diſtinguiſh a particular claſs or order of men from the multitude, may ſerve alſo to diſtinguiſh an individual from his order or claſs; and a ſuperiority thus obtained may be allowed to deſcend in the race. The offspring of heroes comes into the world with a luſtre borrowed from his progenitors. The child is taught to aſſume elevation, as he advances in years; and his rank is acknowledged in the reſpect that is paid to his blood.

The diſtinction of royalty differs from that of nobility only in degree, and is of the ſame origin. In the firſt admiſſion of either, there probably was not any intention to form a conſtitution, or give method and order to the affairs of ſtate. Such diſtinctions, however, when once admitted, nevertheleſs operate to this effect; and, before men had conceived the deſign of a political inſtitution, or came under the ſuppoſed ſtipulation of magiſtrate and ſubject, they have already ranged themſelves into different orders; of which one is in a condition to govern, and another in a ſtate to obey.

So far, then, we may be inclined to think that the caſual ſubordinations, not only of ſex, age, and perſonal qualities, but thoſe likewiſe of birth and fortune, may have preceded any formal intention to regulate the diſtribution of power.

But the forms which ariſe in this manner from inſtincts of nature,

ture, although they may ſerve for ages the purpoſe of political eſtabliſhment, are however no more than a rude material on which the ingenuity of man is to be exerciſed. And his original lot in this as in other inſtances, calls at firſt for his efforts to remove inconveniences which ariſe in it, rather than to improve the advantages of which it is ſuſceptible; although, in proceſs of time, men have recourſe to many inſtitutions and conventions for both thoſe purpoſes.

The defects of a rude ſociety conſiſt, either in a want of order at home, or in the want of ſecurity againſt invaſions from abroad.

Diſorders at home ariſe from the colliſion of private intereſts and paſſions; or from the interfering of private with public and common concerns. In the ſimpleſt ſociety, even that of a family, parties may divide on the ſubject of perſonal conſiderations, and the individual may apprehend an intereſt for himſelf apart from the common cauſe of his kindred.

Under ſuch apprehenſions, the effects, whether of natural affection, of brotherly love, or of family attachment, may be prevented or greatly diſturbed; and political inſtitutions appear to have been at firſt ſuggeſted by the abuſe to which ſociety is expoſed, in its caſual ſtate, whether of ſubordination or anarchy.

At one time, an inſtitution is required to ſtrengthen the hands of thoſe who govern, againſt popular licence, or private crimes. At another time, it is required to fix the limits of power, or to guard againſt its abuſe.

But,

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But, whether we thus aſſume the repreſentations of tradition and early record, in evidence of man's primeval ſtate, or have recourſe to the deſcription of rude or unpoliſhed hordes of our own times, we may conclude equally from either, that the firſt object of concert or convention, on the part of man, is not to give ſociety exiſtence, but to perfect the ſociety in which he finds himſelf already by nature placed; not to eſtabliſh ſubordination, but to correct the abuſe of a ſubordination already eſtabliſhed: And that the material, on which the political genius of man is to work, is not, as the poets have feigned, a ſcattered race, in a ſtate of individuality to be collected together into troops, by the charms of muſic, or the leſſons of philoſophy. But a material much nearer the point to which the political art would carry it, a troop of men by mere inſtinct aſſembled together; placed in the ſubordinate relations of parent and child, of noble and plebeian, if not of rich and poor, or other adventitious, if not original diſtinction, which conſtitutes, in fact, a relation of power and dependance, by which a few are in condition to govern the many, and a part has an aſcendant over the whole.

The idea of men in any ſociety, great or ſmall, having ever aſſembled upon a foot of abſolute equality, and without excluſion of any individual, to diſpoſe of their government is altogether viſionary and unknown in nature. Even where the inhabitants of the ſmalleſt diſtrict or village, with the moſt determined reſolution to equalize the rights of men, have aſſembled, not to deliberate on national affairs, but to elect delegates for that purpoſe, half the people, under the diſtinction of ſex, are excluded at once even from the right of election; a third of the remaining half under the diſtinction of nonage; ſtill more under other accidental diſtinctions; and, where the remainder is not unanimous, and muſt act by the majority, this governing part of the

the community may not exceed 18 per cent, or is under a fifth of the whole.

Theſe excluſions are made upon the foot of a power in thoſe, who arrogate government, not upon a foot of conſent in thoſe who are ſubjected to it. Even the government of the majority, for which there could be no convention, unleſs the people were unanimous, proceeds upon a mere overbalance of power. Two may over-rule one by the ſuperiority of force; but this does not amount to a right, in any one ſpecies of actual government whatever. Providence, indeed, has kindly determined, that, wherever there is ſociety there ſhould alſo be government, of ſome kind or other, to provide for the peace and co-operation of its members. The form of ſociety, like other materials provided for human ingenuity to work upon, may be rude or defective, and require the exerciſe of reaſon to remove its inconveniencies, or to obtain the advantages of which it is ſuſceptible. But the object of reaſon never can be to aboliſh the relation of power and dependence; for this nature has rendered impoſſible; but, to guard againſt the abuſes of power, and procure to individuals equal ſecurity in their reſpective ſtations, however differing in point of acquired or original advantages.

We are not now inquiring what men ought to do, but what is the ordinary tract in which they proceed, and how far the exerciſes of their political ſituation is a part in that ſchool of intellectual and moral improvement, in which they are deſtined to advance in knowledge, wiſdom, and all the eligible habits of life. Mankind muſt be contented to act in the ſituations in which they find themſelves placed; and, except when urged by great occaſions, ſeldom project, and rarely at once obtain, any great innovation. The party which has an advantage in the actual ſtate of

ſociety endeavour to avail themſelves of it; and the party that is aggrieved, ſtrives to obtain relief. The effect is, to preſerve the eſtabliſhment where parties are equally balanced, or to procure ſome change, where either prevail. Even if the ſociety ſhould be led at any particular time, by a ſingle perſon of diſtinguiſhed influence and authority, as in the examples of Lycurgus, Solon, or Romulus, to adopt at once a plan conſiſting of many regulations; ſtill the effect could be no more than to define the condition in which parties ſhould act, and in which they might find occaſions no leſs trying and complicated, than thoſe in which they would have been otherwiſe engaged. A ſtate governing itſelf upon the plan of Romulus might have found no leſs to do for its members, than they themſelves would have otherwiſe found in the condition of ſhepherds or robbers, the nurſery from which this celebrated lawgiver is ſuppoſed to have collected the firſt members of that famous republic, which is ſuppoſed to have taken the firſt principles of political order from him.

The inſtitutions aſcribed to thoſe celebrated lawgivers did not put an end to the political operations of ſtate; they only placed the members of ſociety in ſituations to act with advantage for the preſervation and welfare of their country. Every new emergence required new meaſures for this purpoſe: And the law itſelf, however ſimple in a rude age, muſt have multiplied its clauſes to keep pace with the growing affairs of a proſperous nation; and its application to queſtions of conteſted right, of criminal charge, or public arrangement, muſt have required continued attention on the part of the governed as well as the governing. Under the moſt accompliſhed inſtitutions of government, it remained for the citizens, in every inſtance, to conſtitute and to wield the force of their community, whether for the ſuppreſſion of diſorders at home, or the repulſion of injuries from abroad.

In whatever manner a conſtitution of government be obtained, whether upon the plan of a ſingle perſon, or in the reſult of many ſucceſſive inſtitutions, its affairs muſt continue to exerciſe the faculties of thoſe who are to be employed to conduct or to deliberate upon them; and, to the extent of the numbers ſo employed, ſociety itſelf is to be conſidered as a ſchool in which men are to receive the inſtructions, and perform the exerciſes of intelligence, of wiſdom, and virtue. It is the ſoil on which human genius is deſtined to receive a principal part of its nouriſhment, and to make the moſt vigorous ſhoots of which its nature is capable.

In this point of view, the attainment of a juſt political order otherwiſe ſo neceſſary to the welfare of mankind, is to be conſidered alſo as an occaſion on which the principal ſteps of man's progreſs are made, or in which a ſcene is opened that gives ſcope to his active diſpoſition, and is fitted, like other parts of his lot, to improve his faculties by rendering the exerciſe of them neceſſary to his preſervation and well-being.

As the neceſſities of animal life might have been fewer than they are at preſent, or might have been entirely prevented; ſo the exigencies of civil ſociety might have been ſupplied and regulated by mere inſtinct, as they are in the caſe of other animals, ſo as not to require any efforts of deſign or contrivance on the part of its members. Nature, however, has otherwiſe arranged the fortunes of man; and ſo diſpoſed of his lot, that, being provided with intellectual faculties, he ever meets with a ſuitable occaſion by which they are called forth into uſe.

Theſe faculties or diſpoſitions in his caſe have a principal re-

lation to the community or ſyſtem, of which he is by nature a part. He is made to confer; to inform, or to receive information; to confide, or to diſtruſt; to co-operate, or to oppoſe; to approve, or to condemn; to perſuade, or to diſſuade: And it may be difficult to determine how far ſociety of one kind or other is neceſſary to light up the ſpark of intelligence, or to furniſh the occaſion of thoſe exertions in which alone the exiſtence of this faculty could be known. We have not the experience neceſſary to decide this queſtion, nor the means of comparing the effects of mere ſociety with thoſe of abſolute ſolitude. Men are every where aſſembled in troops together; and, although varieties in the conſtitution of government give them unequal occaſions to employ their faculties, and we are thereby enabled to compare the effects of different political ſituations together; yet, we are not, by any actual experience enabled to judge how far the leaſt perfect form of ſociety ſhould be preferred to the entire ſeparation of the individual from his kind.

On this queſtion, indeed, we might even without the help of experience, aſſume, *a priori*, that minds ſhould become enlightened, in proportion as they have occaſion to receive information from the frequent diſcuſſion of ſubjects, which they are concerned to underſtand; that they ſhould acquire ability and ſtrength of mind, from the neceſſity of deciding on the intereſts, whether public or private, which they are concerned to ſupport. And the hiſtory of mankind has confirmed our conjecture in this matter: It has abundantly ſhewn, in the inſtance of republican governments, that the attainments of knowledge, ability, and public virtue, are proportioned to the concern which numbers are permitted to take, in the affairs of their community; and to the exertion of ingenuity and public ſpirit, which they have occaſion to make in national counſels, in offices of ſtate, or public ſervices of any ſort.

High

High meaſures of intelligence, and mature underſtanding, with all its appurtenances of ſcience, and regular manners, are known to mark the advanced period of political arts; and, as communities differ in reſpect to the national exertions they have made, ſo they differ alſo in reſpect to the attainments of cultivated genius: Hence probably the inequality of nations, both in antient and modern times.

The very evils that afflict ſociety, and the diviſions that ſeem to endanger its being, make a part in the ſcene that is prepared for the inſtruction of its members. Their leſſons are taken in ſcenes of conteſt and trouble, as well as of co-operation and peace. Reſiſtance of wrong is itſelf an action of juſtice: And in this, or any other effort of genius, difficulty tries and ſharpens the wits of men. This whetſtone is found, by the votary of ſcience, in the intricacy of thoſe natural appearances which he ſtrives to explain; by the mechanic, in the ſtubbornneſs of the matter on which he would work; and it is found, by the free and ingenuous citizen, in the reſiſtance he meets with, from intereſts and opinions oppoſed to his own.

The difficulties and impediments which men of ability, in oppoſition, mutually furniſh, are greater than thoſe which are met with in ſtudy however abſtruſe, or in the practice of arts, however laborious or nice. In the conteſt of human abilities, invention is continually at work; obſtructions are mutually preſented; and if the genius of one perſon ſurmount the difficulties oppoſed to him, that of another is employed ſtill to ſupply, in the ſame way, ſome freſh occaſion of labour. The ſcene requires penetration, ſagacity, and fortitude. Henry the Fourth of France, ſays the preſident Hainault, "met with the circumſtances which try, and

" which form a great man;—*difficulties to be overcome, and dangers* " *to be encountered: He met alſo with enemies and opponents worthy* " *of him*". And the author might have ſubjoined, that the effect of ſo much contention, upon his free and ingenuous nature, was not a rancorous animoſity to the parties who had oppoſed him; but a liberal uſe of the experience he had gained, in affability and good will, to the different orders of perſons, who, in the end, were committed to his government.

To the mind, which is by nature endowed with a diſcernment of rectitude and truth, the experience even of evil, may lead the way to what is good. Society, in which alone the diſtinction of right and wrong is exemplified, may be conſidered as the garden of God, in which the tree of knowledge of good and evil is planted; and in which men are deſtined to diſtinguiſh, and to chuſe, among its fruits.

The paths of beneficence and juſtice are open, and marked with every engaging diſtinction of approbation, eſteem, and honour. Thoſe of injuſtice and malice are the reſorts of error, ignorance, and unhappy paſſions. The ſentiments that refer to this diſtinction, are greatly enhanced by the ſympathy and contagion of ſocial natures; inſomuch, that whatever opinion we may form of the poſſible exiſtence of any ſuch ſentiment in the mind of an individual, detached from his kind; we cannot doubt of its being greatly promoted in the communication of numbers together.

The atmoſphere of ſociety, from the whole, we may conclude, is the element in which the human mind muſt draw the firſt breath of intelligence itſelf: or if not the vital air by which the celeſtial

fire of moral ſentiment is kindled: we cannot doubt but it is of mighty effect in exciting the flame; and that the minds of men, to uſe a familiar example, may be compared to thoſe blocks of fuel which taken apart are hardly to be lighted: but if gathered unto heap are eaſily kindled into a blaze.

Language is the inſtrument of ſociety; and, we may preſume, is not employed in any other matter but what the communications of ſociety require; a conſideration from which it ſhould ſeem to follow, that man is indebted to ſociety for every exerciſe of his faculties, of which language is formed to expreſs the attainment or the uſe; a title under which we may fairly comprehend all the efforts of underſtanding or genius.

The affairs of ſociety require the light of ſcience, as well as the direction of a virtuous conduct; inſomuch that the recluſe, by inveſtigating the laws of nature, which relate to the concerns of men, is no leſs employed for his country than the moſt active of its ſervants; or than thoſe who are moſt occupied in diſcharging the functions of ſtate.

The fine arts, too, with all the elegant productions of fancy or taſte, ſpring from the ſtock of ſociety, and are the branches or foliage which adorn its proſperity, or actually contribute to the growth and vigour of the plant.

The moral ſcience alſo ſprings from this ſtock; and has a perpetual reference to ſociety, as the ſchool from which its leſſons are taken, and to which their applications are made, whether in preſcribing the ſocial duties of men, the laws by which they ought

ought to be governed, or in pointing out the ſpecific excellence and felicity of a ſocial nature.

Of theſe ſeveral articles, whether conſidered as appurtenances of human ſociety, or ſubjects of progreſs in the nature of man, we are yet to offer a few ſeparate obſervations in the ſections that follow.

SECTION

SECTION XI.

Of the Purſuits and Attainments of Science.

THERE is no particular in which the progreſs of mind is leſs queſtionable, than it is in the attainment of knowledge. This we ſuppoſe to be a principal object of education; and we eſtimate the progreſs of youth, by this meaſure, perhaps with too little attention to the habits of life they are forming in that early period.

The mind, deſirous of information, is, by its powers of perception, obſervation, and memory, ever making ſome addition to its ſtock, whether in the collection of particular facts and ſpecimens, or in the comprehenſion of a general order, according to which particulars are arranged in the ſyſtem of nature.

The material world in all its parts and movements, the mind itſelf in all its operations and paſſions, are the fields of perception and conſciouſneſs. In each, facts are ſucceſſively admitted, in addition

dition to thoſe which had been already obſerved; and, until old age begin to impair the powers of recollection and memory, every new incident becomes an acceſſion to the ſum of knowledge.

In the terms, Hiſtory and Science, as hath been already obſerved, we may include the different modifications of human apprehenſion, either as it relates to particular facts, or to the general order in which they are connected together.

Hiſtory conſiſts in the detail of particulars: Science conſiſts in the knowledge of general principles and their applications.

The world preſents an indefinite number of individual beings, and of operations, facts, and events. To perceive, and to remember a particular object does not appear to be above the competence of mere animal life: But the taſk of intelligence is greatly ſuperior. This taſk is to obſerve, in the multitude of individuals, the ſpecific character; in the multitude of ſpecies, to obſerve the generic deſcription; in the multitude of genera, to obſerve the claſs or order of being, under which they may be ſeparately ranged; and, in the multitude of operations and facts, to obſerve the law of nature, according to which they proceed.

Such is the order of things reſulting from the energy of Eternal Providence, or, in the language of Plato, Such are the ideas of Eternal Mind, which, when thus realized, furniſh an object of contemplation congenial to the apprehenſion even of created intelligence, though greatly extended beyond the limits of its actual comprehenſion.

Even to the human mind, a world of particulars is agreeable, ſo far only as the general form is underſtood; and the natural progreſs

progreſs of knowledge, to which men aſpire with ſo much avidity, is, from particular ſpecimens, to the general combination and ſyſtem of the whole. Multiplicity without order diſtracts and perplexes the mind; and the higheſt ſpecies of ſuffering, perhaps, that could be deviſed for a being merely intelligent, would be for him to look round on a world of numberleſs individuals, of which no two had any reſemblance or connection together.

The preſent world were actually ſuch a chaos to the human mind, if it were not qualified to ſingle out what the Grecian philoſopher above mentioned calls the *One* in *many*, and to wield the indefinite multitude of things, under general denominations expreſſive of the common deſcription or form in which numbers agree.

The knowing is diſtinguiſhed from the ignorant, no doubt, by the greater number of particulars he has perceived or obſerved; but ſtill more by his proficiency in comprehending the many under the few denominations, in which they are or may be ſtated. And the ſuperiority of ſcience to ignorance cannot, perhaps, be better illuſtrated, than by comparing the caſe of a perſon who can read, to that of another to whom the uſe of letters is entirely unknown. To the mere illiterate ſavage, the multiplied pages of a book, with all its individual type marks or characters, form a maſs of inextricable confuſion and perplexity, from which he turns away with diſguſt and horror. I once turned up the pages of a book to *Omai*, the native of Otaheite, who was lately in England; and he appeared to be ſo much diſtreſſed, that I repented I had done ſo. Such, alſo, to a mind which had no diſcernment of meaning or order in the ſyſtem of nature, would be

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the indefinite multitude of particulars, detached from one another, or in which no ſyſtem could be perceived.

But as to a perſon who has learned to read, the pages before him are diſtinguiſhed into ſentences and periods of deſcription, narration, or argument, under general titles of compoſition; as ſentences are reſolvable into words, and theſe into letters, claſſed into vowels and conſonants, with their reſpective powers of articulation or ſound; no embarraſsment or perplexity ariſes from the apparent multiplicity of type-marks on every page, nor from the mere multiplicity of pages, in a work which is otherwiſe properly executed. Such we may conceive to be the univerſe of God to the mind that comprehends it; or rather, perhaps, to the almighty and intelligent power of its Creator alone.

An author of much authority, * in his introduction to a tranſlation of ſome Hindoo verſes on the ſubject of the Creation, obſerves, "That the difficulties attending the vulgar notion of "material ſubſtances, induced many of the wiſeſt among the "antients, and ſome of the moſt enlightened among the moderns, "as well as the Hindoo philoſophers, to believe that the whole "creation was rather an energy than a work, by which the in-"finite Mind, who is preſent at all times and in all places, exhi-"bits to his creatures a ſet of perceptions like a wonderful pic-"ture or piece of muſic, always varied yet always uniform.

With leſs violence to the ordinary perceptions of men, we may indeed conſider the material world as made, not for itſelf, but for the mutual communication of minds, and forming a ſyſtem of ſigns

* Sir William Jones.

ſigns and expreſſions, in which the infinite Author makes himſelf known to his intelligent creatures. It is a magnificent but regular diſcourſe, compoſed of parts and ſubdiviſions, proceeding, in the original or creative mind, from generals to particulars; but, in the mere obſerver, to be traced by a laborious induction from the indefinite variety of particulars, to ſome notion of the general mold or forms in which they are caſt.

To the comprehending mind, as the variety of ſubjects in nature is reduceable to a few genera, ſpecies, and claſſes of being; ſo the operations of nature are reduceable to a few general and comprehenſive laws.

The object of hiſtory, we have ſaid, is detail; but even in ſuch inſtances the ingenuity of a compiler is diſtinguiſhed as much by the aptitude of his general method, as by the terms of his deſcription in treating of ſingular ſpecimens. Even the vulgar recur to method in enumerating their ſubjects. And ſo obvious is the order eſtabliſhed in nature, that the progreſs made by the learned in perceiving it, though great, bears but a ſmall proportion to the general arrangement, which is perceived no leſs by the vulgar, than it is by the greateſt adept in natural hiſtory.

But on the ſkirt of a world, in which ſo much is already comprehended by every intelligent being, who is deſtined to bear a part in its movements; ſingular or anomalous appearances exerciſe the ingenuity of a few; who, by referring ſuch appearances to ſome claſs of facts or law of nature already familiarly known, but not yet applied to this effect, acquire to themſelves the honours of ſcience or profound diſcovery.

For the ſame reaſon that ſubjects of deſcription, to be compre-

hended, muſt be referred to their ſpecies, kinds, orders or claſſes of beings; the operations of nature alſo muſt have their denominations, and be compriſed in general laws. The boundleſs region of individual facts muſt be divided into compartments, and ranged under the title of active powers; in each of which the eſſence or energy is conceived to be one, although diſplayed in the numberleſs repetition of ſeparate operations.

The preſſure of weight operating individually in ſeparate facts through every maſs, and every particle of matter, is compriſed at once in the general term gravitation. And other facts are diſtinguiſhed from theſe, and from one another, in the terms Magnetiſm, Electricity, Coheſion, Elective Attraction, Heat, Vegitation, Animal life, Intelligence, and ſo forth. Under each of theſe is conceived a boundleſs multiplicity of particular examples and ſpecimens, which, preſented without connexion or arrangement, would overwhelm or diſtract the mind; but ſeparated into kind and ſpecies, form a comprehenſible ſyſtem of operations, that combine together, or balance one another in the order of nature.

Gravitation is diſtinguiſhed by its preſſure in the vertical line. Magnetiſm by its limitation to the loadſtone and iron, with alternate attraction and repulſion at the oppoſite poles. Electricity by its limitation to the excited electric and ſpecific conductor, with its accumulation and diſtribution, manifeſt in various phenomena of attraction, repulſion, ignition, and violence. Coheſion, diſtinguiſhed by the tenacity of parts or particles of matter in a certain ſtate of contiguity, or at diſtances indefinitely ſmall. Elective attraction, by the unequal tendency of different materials, in a ſtate of fluidity, to unite or combine together. Heat or fire is diſtinguiſhed by its power of penetrating every ſpecies of matter

matter, and producing a variety of effects, from mere expanſion, to fuſion, to calcination, and decompoſition of parts.

Vegetation is limited to organized bodies, receiving by their roots, branches, or leaves, increment or change of ſubſtance, from the action of ſoil, air, and light.

Animal life is limited to ſenſe and voluntary motion or action of any ſort.

Intelligence operates in deſign, obſervation, choice, and will. It is traced in contrivances ſuited to an occaſion, and varied as the occaſion requires.

Without attempting a full enumeration of all the powers that operate in the ſyſtem of nature, theſe may be admitted in the number, as principal examples of the kinds or ſpecies under which the principles of action and life may be diſtinctly conceived. The object of ſcience, with reſpect to any ſuch principle, conſidered apart, is to aſcertain its reality, and inveſtigate the mode of its operation, to be ſtated in terms of a general law, collected from the detail of facts, and applicable to explain the phenomena, or diverſified inſtances in which it takes place.

Thus the law of gravitation, with a force proportioned to the quantity of matter, operates equally in bodies whether at reſt or in motion; and, at different diſtances, it operates with a force inverſely as the ſquare of the diſtance. Thus aſcertained and combined with the laws of motion, it ſerves to account for the continued revolution of the moon and other planets in their orbits; for the ebbing and flowing of the ſea, the proceſſion of the equi-

noxes,

noxes, and other phenomena, from which the law of gravitation, if not otherwiſe known, could never have been learned.

In ſuch theories as theſe the ingenuity of ſcientific reſearch is abundantly conſpicuous: But the deſire of comprehenſion in the human mind is ſo great, that even the operating powers which have now been mentioned, though under titles ſo few, appear too many. The whole, or greater part, it is ſuppoſed, may be reſolved into impulſe; the fact with which we are ſo familiar, and of which we think ourſelves ſo well qualified to aſſign the nature or the eſſence. In purſuit of ſuch general theory, attraction and repulſion of every kind are conceived to be the impulſe of fluid ſtreams, preſſing bodies to unite or to ſeparate. Even thought itſelf is reſolved into a colliſion or motion of matter in ſubtile fluids or particles indefinitely ſmall. And the attempt to form ſuch theories, however little ſatisfactory ſerves to evince the diſpoſition to generalization which we are now conſidering.

The love of ſcience and the love of ſyſtem are the ſame: but this paſſion may diſappoint itſelf by puſhing forward too faſt without employing the means which are required to obtain its end.

The laws of nature are inveſtigated by a careful attention to the particulars in which they are known to exiſt; and theories are formed by a like attention to the phenomena, which the laws of nature may ſerve to explain: But men are often in haſte to conceive the ſyſtem, without attending to the parts of which it is formed; and apply the law without comparing its power with the meaſure of effect. The paſſion by which they are urged is buſy in every breaſt; and the ordinary race of men in every nation and in every age, are greatly advanced in the gratification of it. The

mereſt

ſavage has conceived a ſcheme of nature upon which he acts; and, when new phenomena occur, he endeavours to refer them to ſome law or predicament of being already known to himſelf; or if this be impracticable, he imagines ſome new principle better fitted to ſerve the purpoſe.

This laſt expedient is well known under the name of *Hypotheſis*; and ſometimes leads to an error, in the ſubſtitution of fancy for reality; which, though the vulgar be not altogether exempt from it, is more frequent in the ſpeculations of the learned, than in the practical notions of ordinary men.

New facts may ſometimes ſuggeſt a new principle in nature, as accidental appearances ſuggeſted the principles of electricity and magnetiſm, very real in their ſeveral departments, though not generally known as properties of matter. The firſt apprehenſion, therefore, of any ſuch principle, in the form of a ſuppoſition or hypotheſis to be examined, is by no means to be rejected in the purſuits of knowledge: But the final ſubſtitution of mere imagination for reality, is an abuſe by which the love of ſcience has been moſt frequently fruſtrated or miſled; and yet, even in this, the mind finds an occaſion of exerciſe, by which its faculties are in ſome degree improved, and intelligence, in formation of the moſt fanciful ſyſtem, is raiſed above the level of mere animal perception and memory.

Men advance in real ſcience by tracing facts to their general laws, and by applying theſe laws to phenomena, which of themſelves never would have ſuggeſted the law. Human knowledge, therefore, begins and ends with particulars. It is promoted in various ways. In continuing to exiſt, minds have occaſion to learn; in the practice

of

of arts, and in the conduct of life, events have the effect of experiment, and make ſome addition to the fund of knowledge. The merchant, in ſearch of a market, at which he may buy or ſell with advantage, explores the globe, and collects information from the utmoſt bounds of the earth. The traveller or the mariner, that he may have a guide to his movements below, obſerves the heavens above, and ſubdivides the univerſe itſelf by his lines and his circles.

The lovers of ſcience invent methods of calculation or meaſurement, to be employed in comparing the quantities of cauſe and effect; and they ſeize with avidity every new appearance of fact, upon the mere ſuppoſition of its leading to ſome farther acquaintance with the ſyſtem of nature.

Such is an important part of the meaſures, which providence has taken to fix the attention, and to lead the obſervations of men; and by this means to foſter the powers of intelligence with habits of ſagacity and penetration. The faculties thus employed are improved by exerciſe; and knowledge is to the mind what aliment is to the growing body, the means of enlargement, and acceſſion of power and ſtrength.

Knowledge of the laws of nature, and the application of ſuch laws to explain their phenomena, are not merely, like method in the details of deſcriptive hiſtory, a form of arrangement, for the purpoſe of comprehenſion and memory: They lead to the poſſeſſion of power, or the command of events. For in proportion as men become acquainted with the circumſtances required to the production of any natural effect, or know the law according to which any natural operation proceeds; if the ſubject be within their reach, or the circumſtances under their command, they are thereby enabled to repeat the operation, and obtain its effect. Thus men, knowing the

the laws of fluid preſſure conſtruct the pump and the ſyphon, and convey water in cloſe pipes over inequalities of ground. Knowing the polarity of the magnet they conſtruct the mariner's compaſs; and knowing the laws of viſion, they conſtruct optical inſtruments, to extend the limits of ſight beyond its ordinary bounds, whether in the diſtance or minuteneſs of objects.

Although ſcience is moſt profitable to thoſe who obtain it by their own efforts, and who, together with knowledge, acquire habits of obſervation, ſagacity, penetration and memory; yet it is communicable to others by mere information; and if in thoſe who receive it, the energy of underſtanding be awake, to examine its foundations and to purſue its conſequences; ſcience may become in a manner indigenous wherever it is planted. The ſuggeſtions of individuals pervade entire ſocieties of men; ſpread over nations, and deſcend to ſubſequent ages however remote.

The lights of ſcience, even in ſubjects the moſt abſtruſe, are in ſome meaſure diffuſed into every corner of a proſperous ſociety. They direct the hand of the artiſt in his work-ſhop. They are made a part in the courſe of every liberal education. They furniſh the methods of thought and comprehenſion to thoſe who deliberate on affairs, and, by entering into the ordinary converſations of men, become familiar in the commerce of life. So that the moſt retired ſtudent of nature, in extending the limits of knowledge, works for his community; ſeparate communities mutually work for one another, for ages to come, and for mankind. And attainments in this branch, perhaps more than in any other, may be conſidered, not as local advantages gained to any particular ſociety of men, but as ſteps in the progreſs of the human ſpecies itſelf.

Every thing human indeed is ſubject to periſh; and in the ſame race of men, knowledge gives way to ignorance. The light of ſcience is no more in corners where it formerly ſhone: but this is rather the removal than the extinction of light. It paſſes from one race of men to another, and, when it ſeemed to be extinguiſhed, is perhaps about to be reſtored with additional force. The ſcience of antient Greece is loſt to the modern inhabitant of that country; but, tranſmitted to other nations, may yet extend beyond its former or its preſent limits; continue to pervade the foreſts of America; and make its way to regions yet unexplored, beyond the ſouthern tropic.

Science, ſays my Lord Bacon, is fruitful of arts; and an art, after the principle is loſt, may ſerve as the germ of a future diſcovery, or actually enable the ſpeculative to recal the ſcience on which a practice is founded. Who knows but, in ſome former age, the preſſure of the air was known, and led the mechanic in the conſtruction of his pump; as the operation of this engine, or the phenomenon of ſuction, after its principle had eſcaped, has led the inquiſitive to obſerve the operation of weight in the atmoſphere.

The ſucceſsful application of ſcience, to the production of effects, is the laſt and moſt convincing evidence of its reality, or of the truth of its principles. If we ſhould be diſpoſed to conteſt the laws of refraction and reflexion of light, or the theory of viſion, which is founded upon them; their ſucceſsful application to the conſtruction of optical inſtruments, would be an irrefragable evidence of their truth. The art of conducting lightning is an evidence of the theory, which reſolves this phenomenon of the heavens into electrical matter.

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The arts, which thus ſerve to evince the reality of ſcience, likewiſe ſerve to recommend the ſtudy, and to promote the acceptance of it with mankind. The ſubſerviency of mental attainments, even to the purpoſes of animal life, is an effectual incitement to the progreſs of mind.

As mere information received, without the habits of ſagacity and penetration, formed in the acquiſition of ſcience, is of inferior effect in the human mind; it appears to be wiſely ordered by providence, that nations, for the moſt part, however aided by lights from abroad, ſhould have the fabrics of ſcience and art to erect for themſelves; and, in examining what they receive from others, ſhould nearly perform the labours of inveſtigation, though without depending, for the reſult of their inquiries, upon any of the chances to which they are frequently indebted for new diſcoveries.

As if it were intended, that the deſire of man to comprehend the order of things ſhould not be gratified, without affording a proper exerciſe to his faculties, nature has but in part revealed the moſt obvious of her laws. The vertical preſſure of gravitation, pervading the mechanical ſyſtem, and obvious in ſo many inſtances, is juſtly deemed univerſal; yet is it, at certain intervals, even in this ſyſtem, loſt to the view, or hid under contradictory and perplexing appearances. The rain falls from its cloud; but the cloud itſelf is ſuſpended, and other vapours equally denſe aſcend in the atmoſphere.

Thus, nature, of old, was ſuppoſed to have a principle of levity, as well as of weight: And the floating of bodies comparatively

light, in a fluid that is ſpecifically heavier than the body immerſed in it, though a phenomenon of mere gravitation, remained to be known as ſuch in the ſequel of intenſe obſervation and reaſoning; and the attention which was required to make this diſcovery, ſerved, at the ſame time, to ſecure the acquiſition of ſcience to thoſe by whom it is made.

In reſpect to mere animal life, ſcience is the foundation of practical ſkill or art. In reſpect to the mind, it is an advance, from whatever diſtance, to that all-comprehenſive intelligence, from which the ſyſtem of nature derives its exiſtence and its form.

SECTION XII.

Of the Fine Arts.

AMIDST the arts which man has occaſion to practiſe for the ſupply of his neceſſities, or the uſes of animal life; and amidſt the reſearches in which he is engaged to obtain the knowledge of a ſyſtem, of which he himſelf is a part, and in which he is ſo deeply concerned; he is alſo diſpoſed to invent and to fabricate for himſelf works in which he would give ſcope to his faculties, and enjoy the immediate fruits of his own ingenuity, in its mere application or exerciſe.

Of theſe works moſt are projected upon thoſe models of excellence and beauty, in which nature ſo often excites his admiration and ſupplies his delight: Even where he has in view to obtain ſome purpoſe of mere animal life, he often exceeds what this object alone would ſuggeſt. He would adorn what is uſeful, and accompliſh a form, of which the effect, though conjoined with the ſupply of his

his neceſſities or accommodations, is very different from what theſe purpoſes alone would require.

This double purpoſe, of ornament and uſe, is evident in the faſhion of his dreſs, in the architecture of his dwelling, and in the form of his equipage, or furniture of every ſort.

In addition, alſo, to ſuch of his works as are executed for inſtruction, and the communication of knowledge, he ſtudies elegance of manner, and beauty of compoſition, even beyond what is neceſſary to the principal merit of information or ſcience.

In other inſtances the human mind affects to create, and would furniſh the matter as well as the form of its works. Such is the *Poet*'s aim;—a name which, in its origin, ſignifies a *maker*, and implies a contradiſtinction to thoſe who merely avail themſelves of what is made. The diſpoſition to this branch of the arts, is ſuch as to make mankind affect the merit of invention, in preference to that of obſervation or judgement, which are ſo much required to the ſucceſsful conduct of invention itſelf, and ſo eſſential to man, as an actor in the real ſcenes of human life.

Mere efforts of ingenuity, which are thus made to adorn what is otherwiſe uſeful and neceſſary, or to gratify an original diſpoſition of the mind to fabricate for itſelf on the models of beauty preſented in nature, are commonly termed the fine arts.

Of this laſt deſcription are chiefly the arts of poetry, painting, ſculpture, and muſic: And, of theſe, the three former, although they give ſcope to invention and creative fancy, are ſo much employed

employed in copying from nature, that they are ſometimes alſo termed the imitative arts. They differ in reſpect to the means which they employ for imitation; whilſt they agree in the endeavour to procure, by artificial expedients thoſe pleaſures of the imagination, and that intereſt of the paſſions, which belongs to real objects of admiration, or ſentiment of any ſort.

The Greeks had, in real life, their atchievements of heroiſm and valour; but the poet would ſound in their ears his ſong of adventures and paſſions more marvellous that thoſe. In the ſtreets of Athens, were occaſions of diſtreſs to excite commiſeration and terror; but theatres were erected for the exhibition of ſcenes ſtill more piteous and terrible. In the perſon of many a living citizen were exhibited the moſt noble figures and exquiſite models of grace and beauty: but the temples, the porticoes, and other public buildings were hung with pictures or crowded with ſtatues of gods and heroes more beautiful or auguſt than any of the figures to be met with in real life.

In theſe imitations of nature, the painter, with his outline, colour, and diſtribution of light and ſhade, gives apparent relief or prominence even to plain ſurface. And the ſculptor, rejecting the uſe of colour, vies with nature in point of ſolid dimenſion and form.

But the firſt and moſt wonderful production of human genius is language. In this the created mind is itſelf a creator. Worlds in the language of Plato, have ſprung from the ideas of Eternal Mind; and language is the emanation of idea in the mind of man. The material of expreſſion, whether geſture or ſound, is furniſhed by nature; but its ſignificance is the creation of mind intelligent

and ſociable. Wherever ſuch minds exiſt, the meaſure of effect keeps pace with the meaſure of the cauſe. In proportion as minds are knowing, comprehenſive, and ingenious; language is copious and regular, compoſed of generic expreſſions in every department of thought, and theſe brought down to particulars, by ſpecific or individual variations, with clear and luminous forms of inflexion and conſtruction.

Whatever peculiar advantage belongs to the ſculptor's chiſſel, or the painter's pencil, the orator and poet prefer the uſe of language; and, with this wonderful engine, accompliſh works in many reſpects ſuperior to the mere imitations of colour or form, in any dimenſion, ſuperficial or ſolid.

Painting and ſculpture are circumſcribed in the choice of their ſubjects, and limited to ſingle conjunctures and points of time. They are indeed directly applied to the ſenſes, and preſent the thing by imitation and reſemblance, not by the intervention of mere arbitrary ſigns, under which the ſenſe may ſuffer from the want of interpretation. But the inventions of poetry, to compenſate this defect, may be indefinitely varied: They may conſiſt in the object of a ſingle paſſion, whether admiration and delight, grief, indignation, or ridicule, expreſſed in the ſtrains of an ode, an elegy, or ſatire. They may conſiſt of extended relation, fictitious or real, in which many perſons and characters bear a part; and in which ſucceſſive events are exhibited, as in the ſtrains of heroic narrative poetry, or dramatic repreſentation.

In all theſe arts, we are told there is imitation; but, the attempt is rather to new model the forms of nature to our own purpoſe or taſte, than to preſerve them ſuch as they actually are.

We would clear the garden of its weeds, and introduce uniformity, where nature exhibits indefinite variety. We would call forth, under ſingle points of view, thoſe characters of human nature which appear in all the diverſities of life. We would preſent the miſer only in acts of avarice; the ſpendthrift, in acts of prodigality; the high minded, in acts of elevation and courage. All that we would preſerve of nature is a true copy of the part we ſelect; and vie with her in the intereſting ſcenes which take place in the world, rather than produce a mere likeneſs or ſervile copy.

It may however be aſked in this place, and before we proceed any farther, what is this characteriſtic of beauty, in which man pretends in his works to vie with nature, and ſometimes even to improve upon the model which nature has left.

The queſtion has been frequently ſtated, and is no doubt matter of very important inquiry. The taſte of beauty may ſeem to be converſant about corporeal forms, and to meet with its object in the roundneſs of a ſphere, in the flowing bend of a line, or ſurface; in ſingle tints of colour, or notes of muſic: In all or in any of theſe inſtances, there may be a pleaſurable aſſociation of thought or emotion; but this object would ſoon lead us to overlook any forms which have no fixed relation to mind, in order to arrive at what has been termed the firſt *excellent*, and firſt *fair*, the ſpecific ſource of enthuſiaſm * and love, of which the ſlighteſt ray, emitted or reflected by any coporeal form, beſtows that ſpecies of admiration and delight, which we term the ſentiment of beauty, even in matters of ſenſe. But this inveſtigation properly belongs to the branch of moral philoſophy; in which we enquire what is good, under any or

* See the Moraliſts, or Rhapſody, by Lord Shafteſbury.

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all its denominations; and, under this, of the excellent or beautiful among the reſt.

In the mean time, we may obſerve that it appears to be the object of what are termed the fine arts, to exerciſe the faculty and accompliſh the ends of human ingenuity, in the force and juſtice of ſentiment, and in the intelligent arrangement of parts in a work whether ſimple or complicated.

In the works of men, there may be a beneficent purpoſe obtained by reaſonable means. In literary compoſitions, for inſtance, whether of hiſtory or of ſcience, inſtruction may be obtained by a judicious arrangement of the ſubject, and a luminous application of evidence to the diſcernment of truth, or the correction of error. This end may be obtained by a propriety and a perſpicuity of expreſſions; or, as Dr Swift defines the beauty of ſtyle, by the uſe of proper words in proper places. To ſuch works, the epithets of good writing, of ingenuity, or of beautiful compoſition, may be promiſcuouſly applied.

The poet being free to chuſe his materials, as well as the form he is to give them, may ſelect the ſubject of his fable, and fill up the ſuppoſed incidents in a manner to exhibit the moſt inſtructive and intereſting repreſentation of human action and character.

In the poetic ſcene, benevolence, integrity, and elevation of mind, whether in proſperity or adverſity, may be ſo truly placed in the view, as to win the affections, and determine the choice, independant of the events with which the efforts of virtue may be attended. The contrary vices may be brought into view, under juſt colours of deteſtation or contempt, which no proſperity of fortune can remove, or compenſate: And works of ſuch

beneficent tendency may be executed, with ſo much judgement, and ſuch a power of elocution, as to carry the cleareſt evidence of a commanding force or intellectual ability, joined to that ardour of affection and ſentiment, on which we beſtow the appellation of ſuperior genius; and which, transfuſing itſelf into the work it performs, entitles the production itſelf to the proportional praiſe of excellence and beauty.

The painter, or the ſtatuary, may vie with the poet in the moral of his performance, and in the merit of its execution: In his work, alſo, we find the power of invention, and a juſt conception brought forward to the view, by the maſterly hand of an artiſt. Human figures, whether preſented ſingly, or in groups, are the elements of which the work is compoſed; and the artiſt has an opportunity, by ſeizing or amplifying the graces, with which the human form is diſtinguiſhed in nature; by employing its expreſſions of intelligence, benignity, or elevation, to give his compoſitions the beſt moral effect, and to ſecure that effect by the admired execution of a ſkilful performer.

In all theſe inſtances, the material form is recommended by the preſence of ingenuous deſign and intellectual ability, the ſupreme objects of eſteem and reſpect. Works, deficient in theſe particulars, and even works of a pernicious tendency, may have a temporary vogue, from caſual circumſtances, or the caprice of faſhion; but the human mind, when ſuch circumſtance and faſhions have ſpent their effects, muſt ever return to the true ſtandard of eſtimation, and require the merit of goodneſs and wiſdom, to conſtitute a permanent beauty.

The progreſs of fine arts has generally made a part in the hiſtory of proſperous nations; and it is obſerved, that poetry, even

of the higheſt ſpecies, has been the firſt among the productions of art, to attain certain high meaſures of excellence. When we conſider, that ſuch works are the moſt difficult, and the leaſt to be obtained by the ordinary capacities of men; the fact is a paradox; yet abundantly verified in the hiſtory of mankind; and we may think ourſelves qualified to explain it, although no one could have foreſeen, that the efforts of genius were to have made their appearance in this order *.

The ſtyle of poetry is different from that of ordinary diſcourſe; but, to the perſon who ſpontaneouſly employs it, and whoſe mind ſoars above vulgar conceptions, an elevated ſtyle is natural, and the flight of imagination is ſuſtained with a force that may lead at once to the higheſt attainments.

Although genius, therefore, of the firſt quality, be required to ſuſtain the efforts of heroic poetry; yet as men of this caſt are, by a native impulſe of the mind, engaged in ſuch works, without waiting for imitation or inſtruction; the effects they produce, although the moſt difficult, may be the firſt to attain their perfection, or at leaſt high meaſures of excellence. Inferior capacity cannot be made to aſcend ſo high by ſucceſſive ſteps; but the perſon, who is born to this elevation, finds himſelf placed at once on the height to which ſo few can aſpire.

The ſcenery of heroic action is to be found in the rudeſt times; in ſuch times, danger is encountered with courage, friendſhip preſerved with fidelity and ardent affection. Wrongs are reſented with extreme animoſity. If a genius be found that is fit to ſeize the

* Vide Aliſon of the Principles of Taſte, Sect. 2d, part 1ſt.

the ſublime in human character, he will not need the leading of former examples to engage him in the relation of actions, or the deſcription of objects, already brought home to his feelings in the examples of that life in which he himſelf is engaged.

The circumſtances that may induce men to become poets or artiſts of any other deſcription, upon a lower pitch of conception or ſentiment, and with the merit of correctneſs and elegance, rather than that of magnificence and elevation, may come afterwards, and in the rear of many other arts, according as they are attended with the advantages that give to men of ingenuity leiſure from the preſſing cares of human life, and give to the people in general a reliſh for the entertainments provided for minds otherwiſe vacant and unemployed.

Such circumſtances we may conceive to ariſe from the diſtinctions of rank and profeſſion, which accompany a certain ſtate of the commercial arts; from the ſecurity which regular governments beſtow, and the other accompanyments of what are commonly termed the polite ages of mankind, characterized by mildneſs of manners, and abounding at once in the practice of commercial, literary, and imitative arts of every ſort.

In eſtimating the attainments of ſuch ages, we frequently think and talk in extremes. Whilſt ſome have conſidered the polite arts as the only appurtenances of human nature, for which it deſerves to be valued; and have conſidered what they term the polite ages, as the only periods that deſerve to be known or recorded in hiſtory.

Others have conſidered thoſe infuſions of invention and fancy as

an avocation from buſineſs, and a ſeduction of the human mind from the care of itſelf, and the real attainments of virtue.

A late celebrated wit has enumerated four periods of hiſtory, to which he would reſtrict the eſteem of mankind: That of Alexander in Greece: That of Auguſtus at Rome: That of Leo the tenth; or of the Medicis in modern Italy; and that of Lewis the fourteenth in France. Then were the literary and imitative arts in the higheſt eſteem, and the moſt fruitful of productions ingenious, finiſhed, and correct *.

Such arts, however, were reprobated in the Roman republic to a very high period of its hiſtory, as withdrawing the minds of youth from real affairs, and from the intereſts of ſtate, to the fictions of mere imagination, and the refinements of fancy. It was, indeed, natural to rate the ſcenes of Terence among the objects of an idle hour, in the life of Scipio: Literature accordingly at Rome was reckoned a mere amuſement or play; and, even in Greece, the ſchool of letters took the origin of its name from a ſuppoſed affinity to relaxation and idleneſs †.

The arts of decoration in general were excluded by the diſcipline of Sparta; as tending to divert the mind from the care of preſerving its own character in fortitude, magnanimity, and public ſpirit, to the ſtudy of frivolous productions, that gave a luſtre in the eye of ſuperficial obſervers, but no way ſecured the foundations of private or public felicity. The poets, in particular, were excluded by Plato from his republic, becauſe they frequently taught

* See Voltaire's Age of Louis XIV.

† It was called Luſus literarum at Rome, and Σχολη in Greece.

taught the mind to indulge its weakeſt paſſions, and made too free with the objects of the higheſt reſpect.

The productions of human art may, no doubt, originate in any of the paſſions, and partake in any of the characters incident to human nature. As they miniſter to convenience, ornament, and pleaſure, in architecture, gardening, muſic, and manufacture of different kinds; ſo they miniſter to admiration, in the fable of heroic poetry; to grief in elegy; to pity and terror, in tragedy; to indignation and ridicule, in ſatire and comedy; and to mere delight, or to any, or all of the former paſſions, in painting and ſculpture. The arts of imagination, in ſhort, may be employed to conjure up an object, and furniſh the occaſion for any ſentiment or emotion, whether honourable or vile. And we are ſurely not at liberty to extol or to depreciate ſuch works, without attending to the characters they bear, and the effects they are likely to produce.

The topics from which Cicero extolled the productions of literary art; "That they foſter youth, delight old age; adorn proſperity, "give refuge and comfort in adverſity; are pleaſant at home, and "no hinderance abroad; are company in the night and on the road, "in town and country*;" in ſhort that they take entire poſſeſſion of the mind, were probably the very grounds upon which his predeceſſors, of a ſeverer age, refuſed to admit them at Rome. They were, indeed, likely to become an avocation from the buſineſs of ſtate, and it was thought idle to be amuſed with any imaginary ſubject, while there was a real country to be ſerved, a real friend to be ſupported, or a real perſon in diſtreſs to be relieved or protected.

Notwithſtanding

* Hæc ſtudia adoleſcentiam alunt, ſenectutem oblectant, ſecundas res ornant, adverſis perfugiam ac ſolatium prebent; delectant domi, non impediunt foris; pernoctant nobiſcum, perigrinantur, ruſticantur.

PRO ARCHIA POETA, c. 7mo.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. XII.

Notwithſtanding this contempt of learning as being converſant in what may be termed the ſhadowy objects of fancy, rather than the buſineſs of real life; and notwithſtanding the excluſion of poetry in particular from a ſcheme of polity, in which virtue was propoſed as the ſole or principal object of the citizen; it is probable that the fine arts will ever make a part of the unreſtrained progreſs of human nature. And that productions which at Sparta, and even at Rome during a certain period of its hiſtory, were ſuppoſed to be the fruits of weakneſs and corruption, will, by nations in general, be conſidered as a topic of praiſe, and a principal ground of ſelf-eſtimation.

In ſuch applications of the human mind, indeed, either vice or virtue may predominate; and it is the object of wiſdom to give virtue the aſcendant, not to ſtifle ingenuity merely becauſe it may be abuſed. Its attainments make a part in the progreſs of Intelligence, and muſt finally tend to its beſt direction, as well as to the enlargement of its force.

Knowledge, whether in the form of hiſtory or ſcience, is ſurely of great value to the intellectual nature of man. And the records of knowledge, preſerved in literary compoſitions, are the principal means of communicating its benefits from age to age, and from one nation to another. An art by which this effect is produced may, no doubt, be placed among the effectual means of cultivating the faculties of man; of forwarding his progreſs; of extending the fruits of experience, and of augmenting the powers to be derived from a juſt notion and application of the laws by which human nature is governed.

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The mere conceptions alſo of ſuperior genius, and the ſentiments which ariſe in ſuch minds on ſubjects whether fictitious or real, remaining with the people in literary monuments of any denomination, muſt contribute to form the national character, and give to ordinary men ſome participation of the ſentiment and thought which took their riſe from the exertions of a ſuperior mind.

It is not to be doubted, that the genius of Greece was rouſed and directed by the heroic ſtrains of Homer, and of the dramatic poets, which were familiar to the people; and, whether retained in their memories, or repreſented on their theatres, made a principal part in the entertainments even of the vulgar.

It is not to be doubted, that one of the Scipios, without abating the maſculine vigour of a Roman ſoldier, became the more accompliſhed for his acquaintance with the literature of Greece, that Octavius, by his intercourſe with men of elegant talents, and philoſophical knowledge, from a cruel and perfidious adventurer in the purſuits of dominion, became a wiſe and beneficent maſter, in regulating the affairs of a great empire.

The models of literary production to be ſtudied, may be ſuch as tend to inſpire humanity, juſtice, and elevation of mind; but we are not, perhaps, to appreciate their effects ſolely by the degree of excellence they may have actually attained, in any particular inſtance. The attainments of genius or art may be yet at a low pitch; while the effort to raiſe or improve them, is that which carries forward the mind, not only in this, but in every other part of its progreſs.

It is a ſpecific character of active and progreſſive natures,

that they profit by the taſk which they themſelves perform, more than by mere information, or inſtructions received from abroad. This ſource of improvement is open to man from the firſt and the rudeſt efforts of his own ingenuity; and is ſhut only in the laſt, when he ceaſes to act for himſelf, or begins to acquieſce in the enjoyment of what is ſupplied to him by the ingenuity of others. In the courſe of his progreſs, even the error he commits, or the evil he incurs, ſtimulate his exertions and promote his advancement. The object at which he aims is good; and, though ſometimes miſtaken, human reaſon cannot finally acquieſce in what is found to be evil. A miſtake perceived is thereby corrected, a known error is a ſtep to the diſcernment of truth; ſuch ſteps however interrupted or ſlow, lead, in the end, from ignorance to knowledge, and from defect, to the ſupply of that defect. Inſomuch, that although miſtakes may be indefinitely multiplied, it is the tendency of experience to exhauſt the ſum of poſſible errrors, and to limit the choice at laſt to what is beſt.

In the progreſs of proſperous nations, every individual, having his object to purſue, bears a part in the active exertions by which the whole is advanced. The poet, the hiſtorian, or the fine artiſts of any deſcription, are but few, compared to the numbers of a people; but there are none, whoſe apprehenſions or thoughts communicate more effectually with the minds of their countrymen: Inſomuch, that attainments of the ſort we are now conſidering, although they originate with a few, actually pervade the whole; become an article of the national character; are juſtly ranked with the materials of hiſtory; and furniſh a teſt of what nations, long ſince extinct, actually became in the reſult of their progreſs.

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The monuments of art produced in one age remain with the ages that follow; and ſerve as a kind of ladder, by which the human faculties, mounting upon ſteps which ages ſucceſſively place, arrived in the end at thoſe heights of ingenious diſcernment, and elegant choice, which, in the purſuit of its objects, the mind of man is qualified to gain.

Man is formed for an artiſt; and he muſt be allowed, even when he miſtakes the purpoſe of his work, to practiſe his calling, in order to find out for himſelf what it is beſt for him to perform.

SECTION XIII.

Of the Progreſs of Moral Apprehenſion.

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MEN are deeply concerned to aſcertain, and to apply the diſtinction of good and evil; and in this have a progreſs no leſs than in the purſuits of phyſical knowledge, or the practice of arts.

They improve in the detail of their judgements; and advance from the perception of right and wrong, in particular inſtances, to general concluſions, on the ſubject of manners, law, religion, or the ſpecific excellence competent to the nature of man; and, what is ſtill of more conſequence; in happy inſtances, advance in the habits of ſobriety, humanity, and candour.

The diſtinction of right and wrong is coeval with human nature: It is perceived without inſtruction, in acts of fidelity and beneficence, or of perfidy and malice. Theſe are topics of praiſe and blame, in every nation and in every age. That, indeed, which in one inſtance is conſidered as a benefit, in another inſtance is conſidered as harm or detriment. This difference of conception

conception obtains in matters of much phyſical conſequence, even in matters of life and death. The Thracians of old aſſembled to weep and lament at the birth of a child; to rejoice and to triumph at the death of a friend. The ſuperannuated American, in the neighbourhood of Hudſon's Bay, we are told, and will have farther occaſion to obſerve, conſiders death as a favour, and expects it from the piety of his child, or his neareſt of kin. The Gentoo widow deſires to be burnt on the pile that conſumes her huſband's body. Injuries are no where eſtimated by the meaſure of mere phyſical harm; as the ſtroke of a ſtick is more reſented by a gentleman, than the thruſt of a ſword.

On the maxims of former ages, in Europe, it was polite to harraſs a gueſt with ceremony. And, in Kamſchatka, at preſent, hoſpitality requires that a gueſt ſhould be ſo preſſed to eat, and the cottage in which he is received ſhould be ſo over-heated with fire, that he is obliged to take to his heels; and his ſudden flight is the only teſt of his having met with a kind and honourable reception.

Such cuſtoms, indeed, are rather ridiculous than hurtful; but, being incident chiefly to rude ages, may ſerve as examples of a defect to be ſupplied in the progreſs of moral apprehenſion and manners. As the object of benevolence is to confer benefits and to oblige; mere experience of external effects tends to correct miſtakes in this matter, and leads to a better conception of what is conducive to the intereſt or convenience of human life.

In rude minds, the judgement of right and wrong is more diſturbed by violent paſſions, whether of partial attachment, jealouſy, and cruel revenge, than by miſapprehenſion or error: And

nations, in different circumſtances, aſſume for principal topics of praiſe or blame, characters and actions which happen to be favourable or adverſe to their own purſuits or manner of life. In warlike nations or ages, valour is conſidered as the principal conſtituent of virtue, cowardice as the principal conſtituent of vice. Among traders, punctuality and fair dealing is the ſtandard of eſtimation, and, in the cant language of merchants, a good man means a perſon that is ſolvent, and full able as well as willing to fulfil his engagements. In the language of connoiſeurs and *Dilettanti*, Vertu means the ſtudy of antiquities and curioſities of nature and art. Valour was the Ἀρετη of the Greeks, and the Virtus of the early Romans.

But in whatever particular human nature admits of a deviation from truth, it admits alſo of a return to it in the progreſs of experience and better information. The tendency of this progreſs is to make the real welfare and peace of ſociety, founded in juſtice, the rule of propriety and eſtimation in all the external actions of men. And the advances which are made to this point may be collected from the laws, as well as the manners of ſucceſſive ages.

Law in ſome inſtances is an article of cuſtom, and a part in the manners of the people to whom it relates. In other inſtances, it is the will of the powerful, requiring compliance on the part of the ſubject. And in conſtitutions provided for the freedom of the people, it is the deliberate convention of parties, reſpecting the terms on which they are to live in ſociety, and the ſecurities they are to enjoy for their perſons and property.

As the law of cuſtom or practice muſt at firſt partake in the manners

manners of a rude people, ſo it is likely to partake alſo in their ſubſequent progreſs. The judicial combat; the ordeal, as a trial of innocence; or the torture, as a means of obtaining evidence of truth, made a part in the juriſprudence of our barbarous anceſtors. But they have been diſcontinued alſo in the gradual progreſs of reaſon, without the interpoſition of any formal acts to repeal them.

Property in rude ages is ſcarcely diſtinguiſhed from mere poſſeſſion; and the perſon who finds what is loſt, thinks himſelf entitled to ſeize it for his own. But the common intereſt of all parties tends by degrees to ſuggeſt other maxims relating to this ſource of induſtry, and ſubject of judicial diſcuſſion.

The will of the powerful, when unreſtrained, is a ſource of mere partial regulation in favour of one party and againſt another. Thus the patrician laws at Rome were mere acts of violence againſt the plebeians; and the feudal conſtitutions in modern Europe were a ſyſtem of uſurpations, in behalf of the lord and againſt the vaſſal.

To purify the ſources of legiſlation, it were fit that every partial intereſt ſhould be excluded; or what is the neareſt to this in effect, that every partial intereſt ſhould be admitted to guard, and to promote itſelf, as far as is conſiſtent with the welfare of the whole; that the magiſtrate ſhould be admitted into the councils of legiſlation, in order to ſuggeſt and obtain ſuch regulations as may be neceſſary to ſtrengthen the ſinews of government; and to prevent ſuch acts, as under pretence of immunities, might tend to give licence to diſorders and crimes. That the ſuperior orders of the people ſhould be admitted, to give ſtability to govern-

ment, and to guard the advantages of which they are themſelves fairly poſſeſſed: And that the promiſcuous multitude ſhould be admitted by themſelves, or their repreſentatives, to reſtrain any unfair advantages that might be taken of the diſtinctions or powers eſtabliſhed in favour of any part of the community.

When parties of every deſcription are thus fairly conſulted, and accede to acts of legiſlation, the reſult is, a fair convention; and may be juſtly enforced by perſons entruſted with power for this purpoſe. Legiſlature in this form is a continued negotiation, in which the parties are employed to explain former articles, or deliberate on farther agreements for their common advantage or ſafety. And, in this train of proceeding, the lights of experience, or the ſuggeſtion of ſucceſſive conjunctures form a principle of progreſſion on which mankind advance in civilization, good order, and juſtice.

The forms and tenets of religion, as well as manners and law, originating in rude ages, may partake alſo in the ſubſequent progreſs of reaſon and moral diſcernment. The mind of man, ſtrongly impreſſed with the diſtinction of right and wrong, has cauſe to apprehend, that the ſame power, from whom this impreſſion is derived, and who has inſpired the preference that is given to juſtice, is himſelf engaged on that ſide, and is diſpoſed to reprobate what he has taught his creatures to deteſt and condemn.

Under this apprehenſion, there is reaſon to hope that the principles of morality ſhould be ſtrictly connected with thoſe of religion. The fact, however, in the hiſtory of rude minds, is conſiderably different. Superſtition is the fear of harm and diſorder from inviſible powers. It is connected with frivolous obſervan-

ces,

ces, incantation, and penance; even acts of cruelty and malicious effect towards mankind, rather than acts of beneficence and juſtice.

Such it is among barbarous nations in general; and ſuch it was even with the celebrated nations of Carthage and Rome. The former is known, in the ordinary practice of their ſuperſtition, to have offered up human victims in ſacrifice, with circumſtances of extreme cruelty and horror. The other is recorded to have buried human creatures alive, to anticipate or elude the force of a pretended prediction: And the people, by authority of their augurs, and to appeaſe an offended deity, were at times ſubjected to the moſt burdenſome impoſitions; no leſs than oblation of all the increaſe of their herds or flocks for a ſeaſon *: And, in ſome of the Italian hordes, this is ſaid to have extended alſo to the children which were born in the ſame period.

But the human mind, however low it may be found in its ſuperſtitious conceptions and habits, is not devoid of reſources, by which to extricate and to raiſe itſelf. The knowledge of nature, to which mankind aſpire, may, in its progreſs, improve their conception of God, and at once reform their belief, and its application to practice.

The reform, indeed, of falſe notions once taken up, on the grounds of religion, is not to be looked for in the effects of mere reaſon on the minds of ordinary men. Theſe are engaged in their ſuperſtition by the horrors they feel, as well as by their habits of thinking, and require the impulſe of an oppoſite doctrine, urged with ſimilar paſſions, to have any conſiderable effect.

* This was termed the Ver Sacrum.

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Wild ſyſtems of enthuſiaſm or ſuperſtition, accordingly, have been required mutually to ſupplant one another: Reaſon has operated only in the minds of a few. But the diſtinction of good and evil, which we are now conſidering, which recurs in ſo many inſtances, and which is ever attended with the moſt vehement emotions of eſteem and contempt, of love and hatred, is not likely to eſcape the reflections and inquiries of thoſe who would dive into the principle of every natural or moral appearance, and who are qualified to diſtinguiſh reaſon from folly, and the ſtrong impreſſions of juſtice and goodneſs from the feveriſh paſſions of a ſuperſtitious mind, and who would fix their conceptions on a matter of ſo much concern to mankind.

To know himſelf, and his place in the ſyſtem of nature, is the ſpecific lot and prerogative of man.

This prerogative, as far as it ſerves to diſtinguiſh him from the other animals, is a mere attribute of mind, and common to every individual poſſeſſed of certain faculties. Hence, perſons of the leaſt reflection are conſcious of what they themſelves think and intend, as well as apprized of what paſſes in the world around them. They are conſcious of merit and demerit, of innocence and guilt, of juſt apprehenſion, of error and miſtake; can enumerate, to a certain extent, their own faculties, diſpoſitions, and habits: But the proper uſe of this knowledge, in cultivating the ſubject to which it relates, in directing the choice, and in the acquiſition of freedom or power over themſelves, is limited to a few: And, even to thoſe, the purſuit of ſuch knowledge, beyond what the immediate occaſions of human life require, is not the firſt nor the prevailing object of ſtudy.

On

On the ſubject of mind, we have obſerved, men are apt to miſtake familiarity for knowledge; or think it idle to ſtate for matter of obſervation, that of which every one, in the very act of thinking itſelf, is conſcious. The very uſe of their intelligent faculties ſerves to carry their attention beyond themſelves. Every perception has its object abroad. Every art is practiſed for ſome external end. Knowledge, though an attainment of mind, for the moſt part, refers to ſome exiſtence apart from the mind itſelf; and underſtanding, in all its applications, is, with the greateſt number of men, an inſtrument of deliberation or execution relating to other ſubjects; not itſelf a material on which its own power may be exerciſed, and the advantage of ſome improvement obtained.

The firſt efforts of ſtudy, accordingly, in the purſuits of ſcience, are directed to objects not only external, or ſeparate from mind; but even the moſt remote; ſuch as the phenomena of the heavens, or the firſt origin of things on the earth.

Such were the purſuits of ſcience, when Socrates is ſaid to have brought down philoſophy from the heavens; or, to have ſubſtituted, for conjecture relating to the origin of worlds, the conſideration of what man is more immediately concerned to know; the diſtinction of excellence and defect, of good and evil, relative to his own nature, and the conduct of his own affairs.

The exterior forms of morality, indeed, in every nation, and in every age, are an intereſting and a popular ſubject. They bring into view thoſe diſtinctions of wiſdom and folly, of benevolence and malice, on which the mind moſt willingly employs its powers of contemplation and judgement. The firſt compilers of

moral duty, accordingly, no leſs than the ſuppoſed founders of ſtates, remained to ſubſequent ages the objects of great veneration; and were eaſily conceived to have had communication with highly beneficent and ſupernatural powers. Such was the degree of conſideration in which Confucius, Zoroaſter, Mango Capack, and others of a ſimilar deſcription were held by their reſpective nations.

The collection of moral precepts in rude ages is for the moſt part a ritual of external forms, in which men are directed to reſtrain their paſſions, and to counteract the effects of their intereſt in behalf of their duty to other men. Virtue, in many inſtances being an effort of toil and of ſelf-denial, was ſuppoſed to need as well as to have a reward or compenſation, in ſome way different from itſelf.

Theſe conceptions, however, do not ſatisfy the inquiſitive mind. If virtue be a good, why not embrace it for itſelf? If not a good, why prompt the obſervance of it by conſiderations foreign to its nature? Theſe queſtions are eaſily anſwered, with reſpect to the diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments, in what concerns the peace or good order of civil ſociety. The community rewards the dutiful, or puniſhes the diſorderly, to induce every member to abſtain from what is hurtful, and to do what is beſt for the community; without conſidering how far it is, in the nature of things, beſt for himſelf.

But the philoſopher, who would inveſtigate the principles of choice for mankind, cannot recommend to the individual as an article of wiſdom, what is not good for himſelf as well as for others.

The

The firſt great point to be ſettled, therefore, in forming any ſyſtem of morals, is the ſpecific good competent to human nature, that in which the individual can moſt benefit himſelf and his fellow creatures.

It muſt be agreed, upon all hands, that, if this choice can be aſcertained, men will have found the proper ſtandard of eſtimation and the rule of life. It makes or conſtitutes the virtue which it recommends, and it rewards the labour which it enjoins.

This was the object to which the converſations of Socrates were pointed; and they led in a few ſubſequent ages to a variety of ſyſtems, in which the authors attempted to lay the foundations of moral ſcience on ſome general principle relating to the chief good or deſtination of man. They all agreed in making happineſs to conſiſt in the proper conduct of life; but ſome would detach man from his fellow creatures and would have him decline the cares of a family, or any charge in public affairs. Others would have the individual to conſider himſelf as a part in the community of mankind, happy in diſcharging the offices of a friend to his neighbour, and in ſubmitting to the will of providence in matters not placed in his own power.

The firſt ſchemes of moral wiſdom, which were formed on theſe principles, having the advantage of novelty, drew attention not from the multitude alone, but from thoſe alſo who were moſt diſtinguiſhed in the higher ranks of life, ſtateſmen, warriors, and kings. And before the multitude of falſe or ſuperficial pretenders began to diſcredit the profeſſion of philoſophy, a fair trial was made of its force, as the nurſery of heroes and the ſchool of men.

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT. XIII.

" In point of fortune and common opinion," ſaid Antigonus, in his letter to Zeno, " I may hold myſelf your ſuperior; but, in " reaſon, diſcipline, and true happineſs, know that you greatly " ſurpaſs me. For this reaſon, I now write, to intreat that you " will come to me; and hope that you will not refuſe my requeſt. " By all means, then, haſten to join me here; and be aſſured, that " your inſtructions will be a benefit, not only to me, but to all " the Macedonians alſo. Whoever inſpires the king with virtue " will do the ſame to his people: For, ſuch as the ſovereign is, " ſuch, for the moſt part, is the ſubject diſpoſed to become*."

From the diſtinguiſhed names that appear in the hiſtory of philoſophy, whether as inſtructors of mankind, or themſelves as actors in the great ſcenes of human life, ſuch as Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Epaminondas, Ariſtotle, Zeno, Cicero, Cato, Thraſea, Helvidius, Epictetus, and Aurelius; we muſt conclude that the progreſſion of human nature, in this matter, is not leſs conſpicuous, than it is in the other particulars, in which we have attempted to trace its advancement.

It is obſervable, indeed, in this and in other articles of man's progreſs, that it is not always equable, nor exempt from interruption. Men continue for ages apparently or comparatively indifferent to ſcience of any ſort; and, even where the deſire of knowledge is awake, particulars of ſmall moment engroſs the attention to the excluſion of others more important. Phyſical ſtudies are in faſhion at one time, and morals are neglected. Even where the laſt may have their turn among the objects of ſpeculative diſquiſition, they are treated more as an object of theory, than of choice and command. To the ſpeculative, even mind is a foreign

2 object,

* Vide Diog. Laertius, in Vita Zenonis.

object, in which he is ambitious of new and ingenious diſcovery, more than of uſe. The *Tua res agitur* is forgotten even here; and the learned is buſy for others, not for himſelf. Men of aſpiring diſpoſitions affect to be diſtinguiſhed from the vulgar, and become indifferent even to the ſublime principles of religion towards God, and charity towards men, if they are the common expreſſions on every tongue.

The effect of philoſophy of old was no doubt in ſome meaſure owing to the diſtinction it gave. With this ſuppoſed advantage, or the power it beſtowed, philoſophy was communicated from Greece to Rome. It formed in part the principle upon which eminent men, in times of the republic, devoting themſelves to the ſervice of their fellow citizens, threw open their doors to ſuch as had occaſion to conſult them on queſtions of equity or juſtice. And even under the emperors, it continued to beſtow on numbers that freedom and elevation of mind, which the new form of government was otherwiſe likely to ſubdue. But the revolution, which overthrew the republic, did not reach the minds of thoſe to whom the maxims and habits of philoſophy had deſcended as an inheritance from their fathers. Whether promoted, as they ſometimes were, near to the higheſt ſteps of the throne, or proſcribed and perſecuted for a freedom of ſpirit which tyranny could not ſuppreſs; the power and preferment which did not corrupt, or the cruel oppreſſion which could not debaſe, equally raiſed and ſupported them in the eſteem and confidence of their fellow citizens. They ſtill devoted themſelves to public ſervice. In their capacity of council in matters of juſtice and equity, their doors were open, as in times of the republic, to all who wiſhed to conſult them. Even the emperor Auguſtus, deriving a new character, from the philoſophy to which he had recourſe on his poſſeſſion of the throne of Cæſar, enjoined, by a formal edict, that the gratuitous anſwers

of

of thoſe philoſophic counſellors ſhould be recorded in the courts of law, and adopted as a part in the civil code. Antiſtius Labeo, and Atteius Capito, in whoſe favour this edict of the firſt emperor was publiſhed, were followed by others, who enjoyed a like conſideration in the ſubſequent times of the empire. And from them chiefly is derived that ſyſtem of juriſprudence, which ſtill advanced to maturity, amidſt the decline of every other art or political eſtabliſhment, in the empire of Rome.

The philoſopher reſts his choice of a part to be acted in human life, upon the conſideration of what he himſelf by nature is; and, upon the conſideration of his ſituation or place in the order of things, he conceives himſelf as a part not in the community of mankind alone, but in the univerſe of God. "If I have done a "good office," ſays the emperor Aurelius, "let me not forget that "this itſelf is my good; and let me never ceaſe to do ſuch things." In recognizing his ſtation, he does not limit his view to any particular diviſion of mankind; but conſiders himſelf as a part in the great ſyſtem of nature, excellent in being fitted to his place, and happy in contributing to the general good. "Whatever is a-"greeable to thee, ſhall alſo be agreeable to me, O beautiful order "of nature! Whatever thy ſeaſons bring, ſhall be fruit, neither too "early nor too late for me." Such ſentiments of a ſublime religion, may be juſtly conſidered as the higheſt attainment of created intelligence. Its foundations are laid in the genuine leſſons whether of phyſical or moral ſcience; and are to be met with in the concluding obſervations of Newton's Principia, no leſs than in the remains of Socrates or Epictetus, of of Marcus Aurelius. In the one, it is the ſuggeſtion of final cauſes, or of an arrangement in the works of nature, for which mechaniſm alone will not account. In the other, it is the reſort of minds devoted to the

the government of wiſdom and the ſentiments of benevolence, and who receive, with ſome degree of a congenial ſpirit, the indications of ſupreme intelligence and goodneſs, as they are perceived to operate in the great ſyſtem of the world.

Two things only are required, ſays Epictetus, to raiſe the mind to a juſt ſenſe of divine providence,—attention to the courſe of nature, and a grateful mind.

And thus, we may conclude, the higheſt point to which moral ſcience conducts the mind of man, is that eminence of thought, from which he can view himſelf as but a part in the community of living natures; by which he is in ſome meaſure let into the deſign of God, to combine all the parts together for the common benefit of all; and can ſtate himſelf as a willing inſtrument for this purpoſe, in what depends on his own will; and as a conſcious inſtrument, at the diſpoſal of providence, in matters which are out of his power.

It is thus we may conceive the principles of progreſſion to ſubſiſt in human nature. As they are never ſuppreſſed, we ſhould conceive them ever to operate, and ſhould expect a continual advancement, in ſome one if not in all the purſuits and attainments we have mentioned: But human affairs are ſubject to viciſſitudes; and the human ſpecies is obſerved to decline in ſome periods, no leſs than to advance in others.

Among the circumſtances which lead in the progreſs or decline of nations, that of political ſituation may be juſtly reckoned among the firſt or moſt important. And in this the moſt favourable conjuncture is ſometimes obtained, or the reverſe is incurred,

PART I. CHAP. III. SECT XIII

with perfect blindneſs to the future, or ignorance of the conſequences which are likely to follow. The parties would always better themſelves: But they are often driving they know not whither. Thus the Barons of England, in times of high feudal ariſtocracy, knew not that the charters, which they extorted from their ſovereign, were to become foundations of freedom to the people over whom they themſelves wiſhed to tyrannize. No more did the Roman people foreſee, that the ſupport they gave to Cæſar, in reducing the ſenate, was in effect to eſtabliſh a military deſpotiſm, under which they themſelves were to forfeit all the advantages of a free nation.

The viciſſitudes to which human affairs are expoſed, are an eſſential article in the ſcenery of an active life: They are fitted for the inſtruction of thoſe who would profit by their ſituation and their faculties, or preſerve thoſe advantages of either ſort, which the experience of mankind informs them may be forfeited by folly and neglect, no leſs than obtained by wiſdom and virtue. And this diſcipline to which human nature is ſubjected, is not a rule of neceſſity, but a recommendation to will and choice. Examples are preſented to nations no leſs than to ſingle men. For both, the way is ſtrewed with the effects of vice and folly, as well as thoſe of virtue and wiſdom; ſo much that neither can complain they are bereft of direction to what they ought to chuſe, or warning of what they ought to avoid. As the rock is covered with wrecks, ſo the fair channel is open to thoſe who would ſteer in ſafety.

When we ſay that the Author of nature, has projected a ſcene of diſcipline and progreſſion for men; it is not meant to affirm any rate of actual attainment for this verſatile being. The faculties are given to him, and the materials are preſented for his uſe: But the effect is optional to him. We aſcertain the rule by which

which mechanical operations proceed, and can predict, to a ſecond, when the ſun or the moon ſhall be eclipſed, when Jupiter will be in oppoſition, or Venus paſs over the diſk of the ſun. But we cannot affirm what men will do in any caſe whatever. If the ſame phyſical conjunctures return, the ſame principle of caprice or choice in the mind of man returns alſo; and, in any given circumſtances, the actor is ſometimes inclined to vary his conduct, merely becauſe he would try a different one.

In alluding, therefore, to what mankind may have gained, we do not limit the view to what the ordinary race of men have accompliſhed; but rather look forward to that of which human nature in the beſt is ſuſceptible. Let thoſe who queſtion the reality of that progreſs, which we ſuppoſe the human ſpecies to be making, compound the matter with others, who contend that man in his original ſtate was no more than a brute. This ſpecies indeed, however near at the outſet to the ſtate of mere animal nature, is carried, in the reſult, far beyond the concerns of this claſs, and ſeems prepared to penetrate with its views and active exertions, beyond the limits of this terreſtrial globe.

The ſequel in this order of things is yet hid from our ſight. The life of a plant is come to an end, upon its ſeparation from the ſoil on which it was deſtined to receive its nouriſhment, and terminates with the ſtructure of its parts. The exiſtence of an animal may be naturally limited to the ſcene for which his organization and his inſtincts are provided: But intelligence has no ſpecific place. It is a qualification to live, wherever the circumſtances of the ſcene can be obſerved and underſtood. It is thus that man, while the other animals are limited to their different

climates and ſituations on the earth, is qualified to live on this globe wherever he is placed, and wherever his faculties are ſufficient to direct him in what it is proper for him, in his reſpective place to chuſe and to perform. How much farther he may be qualified to continue his exiſtence, and accommodate himſelf to new ſituations, is a queſtion of conjecture which men have frequently agitated, and on which they have for the moſt part fondly adopted a deciſion in their own favour.

In reſpect to mortality man ſeems to be involved with the other animals. And the appearance at death is to him, as well as to them, a final extinction of every active power. But as he has views which reach far beyond theirs, ſo he has hopes alſo which extend far beyond the period of exiſtence, in which they are made to partake with him. How far theſe hopes are probably grounded may be conſidered in this place; the queſtion ſeems naturally to ariſe, in the ſequel of what has occurred on the ſubject of man's progreſſive ſtate, and his capacity of advancement: a capacity which is very real in the loweſt ſpecimens of his nature; and no where exhauſted even in the higheſt.

SECTION XIV.

Of a Future State.

THE evils of a preſent life are acknowledged, or exaggerated, and aſſumed as prognoſtics of a future ſtate, in which theſe evils are to be done away or compenſated. But a ſuppoſed derangement in the only ſcenes with which we are acquainted, is ſurely but an ill preſage of better and happier ſcenes to be expected, under a continuation of the ſame government.

It will be underſtood, that, in treating of this ſubject, as of others that occurred in ſome of the preceding ſections, it is intended to explore the regions of conjecture, ſo far as they are open to mere reaſon, without any ſupernatural aid: And we muſt not be ſurpriſed if, in this attempt we meet with clouds, through which we cannot ſee our way; and boundaries of knowledge, which our faculties are not fitted to paſs. Nor ought we to be diſcouraged, reſpecting the ſum of our condition in the ſyſtem of nature, from the undecided appearance of things to come. The future, even

reſpecting

reſpecting the remainder of this animal life, is hid in obſcurity; and, upon this ground, we take meaſures to fix our lot for the better; and, among impending uncertainties, would help on the events which we wiſh to obtain. The chance of life may be calculated for the infant at his birth, or for the adult at any year of his age; but, it is ſtill no more than a chance, never a fixt nor a determinate period.

Of this uncertainty in the proſpect of human life, the final cauſe is obvious: For, to a being whoſe activity is eſſential to his own welfare, and to the order of nature, the proſpect ſhould ever be ſuch as to admit and to ſtimulate his active exertions. The certainty of an impending end would check his enterpriſe, or the certainty of a long period yet to come encourage his procraſtination.

If the period of mere animal life be thus properly undefined, we cannot juſtly complain that the proſpect of future exiſtence in a ſtate of ſeparation from the body ſhould be alſo uncertain: Or rather, we may conceive the will of Providence in this matter to be, that man ſhould attend to his preſent taſk, and not ſuffer himſelf to be diverted from it by proſpects of futurity, towards which he can contribute nothing, beſides the faithful and diligent performance of a part which is now aſſigned to him. *Hoc age* * was, of old, the watch-word of religion, in the performance of its rites; and may juſtly be admitted as the watch-word of human life, in the diſcharge of its duties: Inſomuch, that they who conceive the merits of men in the preſent ſtate of exiſtence, to conſiſt in the continual anticipation of a future one; or

* Mind what you are about.

or who would have men to be employed, for the ſake of futurity, in the performance of duties at preſent of no value, appear in this matter to miſtake, or even to counteract the deſigns of Providence.

Mankind, nevertheleſs, are not by nature precluded from looking forward to a ſcene of exiſtence beyond the grave. The ingenuity which penetrates the boundleſs regions of ſpace, has looked into futurity alſo. And final as the appearance of death ſeems to be, reſpecting the extinction both of intelligent and of animal nature, mankind very generally, if not univerſally, hold their own deſtination in this, as in other particulars, to be very different from that of *the beaſts that periſh*: They have conſidered ſeparation from the body, not as a termination of exiſtence; but as an entry to a new ſcene, on which even the rudeſt minds have employed imagination, and in which the more elevated ſpirits conceived a return into the boſom of that intelligent Power from whom their being is derived; or in which they conceived a continual approach to that perfection, of which their own nature is ſuſceptible. Socrates, to thoſe who enquired how he would be interred, ſaid, "As you pleaſe, if you can lay hold of me, and if "I do not eſcape you. My body, indeed, will remain with you, "to be diſpoſed of as you ſhall think fit."

To man, the proper ſubjects of knowledge are the preſent or the paſt: Yet, in ſome inſtances, the knowledge of theſe is a knowledge of the future alſo. Whoever knows an order of things that is eſtabliſhed, or the deſcription of a thing that is durable, knows the future reſpecting ſuch matters, together with the preſent and the paſt. Every one ſees that the revolving heavens will bring the ſame appearances in time to come that they now do, and

and have done in time paſt. The tree that bore its bloſſoms in the ſpring, and its fruit in the autumn, is expected to reſume the ſame appearances, and repeat its gifts upon the return of the ſame ſeaſons.

The cauſe of foreknowledge, in every ſuch caſe, is the previous uniformity of events, preſumed to continue in times future, as in thoſe that preceded; or the duration of a given nature, through all the periods in which its exiſtence continues. So far, however, foreknowledge is limited to matters in which the continuation is not interrupted; for, wherever nature has accompliſhed a period, and has not ſhown any ſequel, human ſagacity, with reſpect to ſuch matters, muſt come to a cloſe alſo.

Thus, and no farther, the uniform courſe of events, or the laws of nature, are ſufficient *data*, from which to infer the future. But, even where this ground of foreknowledge may fail, there is yet another, leſs ſecure perhaps of its foundation, but enabling us to carry our conjectures to a greater extent.

In works of intelligence, we conceive a deſign, and a manner of execution. And although the manner of execution may change; yet, while the ſame intelligent power continues to operate, we apprehend a continuance of the ſame deſign. We infer the future from the paſt; and without a repetition of the ſame events, we lay our account with events directed to the ſame purpoſe, though obtained in different circumſtances, and by different means. It is thus we reaſon from the ſeen to the unſeen, in the works of nature. There are animals of a different deſcription from thoſe we know; but, apprehending a deſign to accommodate their forms to the circumſtances in which they are placed;

ced; we preſume that in different ſituations, although they have not the ſame form, they will be equally fitted to their place. We preſume that the plant, which grows in any remote part of the earth, is fitted to its ſoil and its climate; and the animal, to his element and manner of life; although both ſhould differ from any thing we have hitherto known.

The deſign to create, and to preſerve, of which we perceive the temporary effects in matters that are periſhing, we may apprehend to produce more laſting effects, or to be of indefinite continuance, in reſpect to natures of a more permanent kind, or better fitted to laſt through indefinite periods of time.

Here no doubt, the evidence of futurity is leſs cogent than it is in the anticipation of what is known to reſult from an eſtabliſhed phyſical order of things. In reaſoning from the purpoſe of intelligent beings, our conception of the deſign may be raſh, or inadequate; our knowledge of the circumſtances through which we ſuppoſe a ſcheme to be continued, is no doubt defective; and our inference muſt be drawn with a proper degree of diffidence and modeſty: Yet this is a topic to which intelligent beings muſt have recourſe in mutually forecaſting their reſpective actions. It is thus that we infer the future conduct of men, from our knowledge of the end to which their actions are uſually directed. The uniformity, of which they are ſuſceptible, is not a preciſe repetition of the ſame actions; but the ſame purpoſe continued through ſuch a variety of action, as the difference of ſituation may require.

In the ſequel of this argument, as we experience a deſign to limit the exiſtence of periſhing combinations, we ſhould appre-

hend a deſign to preſerve through unlimited periods, natures of which the eſſence is permanent, and qualified for indefinite variety of ſituations. We conclude that the ſame intelligent power, which preſerved the one, while the parts of which it was compoſed are fit to remain in their place, will preſerve the other through correſponding periods of time.

From this topic, alone, it is that we are entitled to argue the duration of the human ſoul, after its ſeparation from the body; inſomuch, that philoſophy muſt have been ſilent on this head, until the hopes of immortality could be derived from religion, or until the minds of men had formed ſome conception of the deſigns of Providence.

There is an argument in which we would infer a phyſical immortality of the ſoul, from its immateriality or indiviſible eſſence; but, notwithſtanding the form of demonſtration aſſumed in this argument, the hopes of immortality muſt reſt, not upon the ſuppoſed independent exiſtence of any created being whatever; but, upon a more rational aſſumption, that a diſpoſition in the Maker to create is alſo a diſpoſition to preſerve what is created; and that the energy of Eternal Power, in creating and preſerving, is the ſame.

Agreeably to this aſſumption, annihilation is no where known in the ſyſtem of nature. Modes of exiſtence, that conſiſt in the combination of parts, change by decompoſition; and paſs, by recompoſition, into a repetition of the ſame forms. Subſtance remains unaltered; and form is perpetuated in a ſeries or ſucceſſion of ſimilar combinations.

The organization of matter and the ſpecies of organized bodies

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is preſerved; but the object of preſervation is a ſeries, and a continued ſucceſſion, not the perpetuity of any one individual. With reſpect to ſuch beings every life has an end, as well as a beginning; and the ſame hand that has compoſed the parts, and preſerves the compoſition through a certain period, is alſo, at the expiration of that period, ſtretched forth to diſſolve. So it fares with the generations of plants and animals: The ſpecies is preſerved by continual ſucceſſion of new generations; but the individual in each is deſtined to periſh.

Such may be the form of preſervation, alſo, provided for the univerſe of minds or created intelligence: But, if we may be allowed to employ our feeble conjectures on ſuch arduous ſubjects, there is ſuch a difference between the exiſtence of animated bodies and the exiſtence of mind, as may lead us to apprehend a different treatment. This world, or place of reception for plants and animals, is limited, in reſpect to ſpace, and the ſupply of ſubſiſtence; and it is limited, of courſe, in reſpect to the numbers it may at once receive; ſo much that, in a ſcene of continual creation, the death or removal of one generation, is not leſs neceſſary to the order of nature, than the birth and ſucceſſion of another.

Without this removal of one generation, to make way for that which is to follow it, the kingdom of plants and animals would ſoon be overſtocked. But, to mere intelligence, whoſe preſence does not occupy ſpace; whoſe faculties are nouriſhed by knowledge, in which indefinite numbers may partake, and not by the exhauſtible ſupplies of food; to a being, whoſe ſtrength conſiſts in affections of the mind, which become the more intenſe for being communicated; to a being, whoſe excellence conſiſts in wiſdom and goodneſs; there are no limits in the ſpace required

for his reception, nor in the numbers that may ſubſiſt together: Or rather, the multiplication of numbers but multiplies the occaſions on which the happineſs of ſuch a being is manifeſted, and extends its effects.

The world of ſpirits, therefore, may increaſe for ever, or cannot be overſtocked; and the deſign to preſerve, which we infer from the will to create, may operate indefinitely, and find no end.

The human mind is obſerved to make progreſs in the preſent ſtate, and to lay the firſt courſes of a building which is to conſiſt of knowledge and intelligence. This is done by means of perceptions conveyed through animal ſenſe: But, if this ſcaffolding which is obſerved to rot and decay, ſhould be actually removed in the termination of animal life, it is not neceſſary that the building ſhould be diſcontinued: ſome other contrivance may be found, enabling the ſuperſtructure to riſe far above any height to which the former mechaniſm, or material contrivance, could enable it to reach.

It has been obſerved, that the author of nature appears to delight in variety; and we may now add, not merely in the variety of deſcription, that may ſerve to diſtinguiſh quieſcent natures; but, in the variety of ſteps, alſo, incident to the progreſs and continued exiſtence of one and the ſame being.

Such are the ſucceſſive variations exhibited in every part of the vegetable, animal, and the intellectual kingdom. Among theſe, there are examples of progreſſion coming, in one line or direction, to an end; but, renewed in a different one. The

butterfly originates in a ſpecies of egg, which is depoſited on the leaf of a plant, from which the animal, after he is hatched, may derive his nouriſhment. He lives, at firſt, in the form a worm or caterpillar. He enjoys the food, that is provided for him; and, as far as we are qualified to obſerve, bears no prognoſtic of any farther deſtination: But, having grown to a certain dimenſion, he becomes reſtleſs in his place; and removes to ſome place of retreat, in which he may repoſe, and end his life undiſturbed. He mounts to ſome height from the ground, and makes himſelf faſt; while his animal functions are ſuſpended or apparently ceaſe. In the mean time, he takes a new form; and, caſed with an inflexible cruſt, becomes what the naturaliſts have called an aurelia or chryſalis, without any power of local motion, or appearance of life.

But, to the changes which he has thus undergone, ſucceeds, in the proper ſeaſon, a change ſtill farther removed from his original ſtate: He awakes from his torpid condition, breaks the cruſt of the chryſalis, in which he was caſed; is borne aloft upon wings variegated in the pride of moſt beautiful colours; and thus, from a reptile that crept on the ground, or devoured the groſſer part of a leaf, on which he was hatched, he comes to perform all his movements in the air, and ſcarcely touches a plant, but to ſuck from its flower the fineſt part of its juices; he ſports in the ſun, and diſplays the activity of a new life, during the heat and the light of noon.

Such tranſitions are known in many others of the inſect or reptile tribes. The frog, for inſtance, in the firſt period of life is a tadpole, with the organization and the inſtinct of a fiſh; formed like that claſs in the order of nature, to hold his place in

in the element of water; but, after a certain period, has elapſed in this ſtate of exiſtence, his form and his inſtincts are changed; the tail or fin of a fiſh is transformed into the foot of a reptile; he eſcapes from the pond; becomes the tenant of a different element; and retains only ſo much of his original nature, as to be amphibious, and to return occaſionally to the element in which he began to exiſt, and in which he is ſtill qualified at times to remain.

What is the living order of nature throughout, but a continual ſucceſſion of one form to another, in the progreſs of her works? The ſtamina of every plant, and of every animal, are lodged in its ovum or ſeed; and the talleſt oak in the foreſt is grown from the fibres, that were wrapt up in the huſk of an acorn. In this condition, while the organic matter is at reſt, during indefinite periods, it is endowed with a principle of life, which preſerves its ſubſtance, and its fitneſs to aſſume the ſpecific form of being, to which it is deſtined. Without ſuch a preſervative, we ſhould ſuppoſe that, like other corruptible matter, the ſeeds of plants ſhould putrify, decompoſe, and loſe the ſpecific ſtructure of their parts. They are, nevertheleſs, known through indefinite periods of time, to retain their vegetative power, without its exertion; until placed in the circumſtances that enable them to ſpring, they exhibit the efforts of nature, and aſſume their ſpecific forms of vegetation and progreſs of growth.

To the ſeedling animal, there is a firſt period of life, in which the power of ſpontaneous motion is joined to ſenſibility, and to the perception of circumſtances, which call for the efforts he is able to make, whether to obtain relief from inconvenience, or to enjoy an advantage. With the oviparous animal, this period paſs-

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es in the film or ſhell of an egg; with the viviparous, it paſſes in the womb of the parent. In this firſt period of life, there is a progreſs of the embryo, or the fœtus, not only in the mere growth or development of organs, but in their ſpontaneous exertions alſo. The heart, and the blood veſſels, are not only formed, but enter upon their functions, with the moſt lively effects; and the animal, at every limb, begins to practiſe the movements which he is deſtined to make in future periods, and in a different ſtate of his being.

If the human fœtus were qualified to reaſon of his proſpects in the womb of his parent, as he afterwards may do in his range on this terreſtrial globe, he might no doubt apprehend in the breach of his umbilical cord, and in his ſeparation from the womb, a total extinction of life; for how could he ſuppoſe it to continue after his only ſupply of nouriſhment from the vital ſtock of his parent had ceaſed. He might indeed obſerve many parts in his organization and frame which ſhould ſeem to have no relation to his ſtate in the womb. For what purpoſe, he might ſay, this duct which leads from the mouth to the inteſtines? Why theſe bones that, each apart, becomes hard and ſtiff; while they are ſeparated from one another by ſo many flexures and joints? Why theſe jaws, in particular, made to move upon hinges, and theſe germs of teeth which are puſhing to be felt above the ſurface of the gums? Why the ſtomach, through which nothing is made to paſs? and theſe ſpungy lungs, ſo well fitted to drink up the fluids; but into which even the blood that paſſes every where elſe, is ſcarcely permitted to enter?

To theſe queries, which the fœtus was neither qualified to make, nor to anſwer, we are now well apprized, the proper anſwer would be, The life, which you now enjoy, is but temporary;

porary; and theſe particulars, which now ſeem to you ſo preposterous, are a proviſion which nature has made for a future courſe of life, which you have to run, and in which their uſe and propriety will appear ſufficiently evident.

Such were the prognoſtics of a future deſtination, that might be collected from the ſtate of the fœtus; and ſimilar prognoſtics, of a deſtination ſtill future, may be collected from preſent appearances in the life and condition of man.

In this condition of a mere animal, for what purpoſe obſerve the heavens? or ſtrive to penetrate appearances, with which the globe of the earth itſelf has no connection? What concern has any mere animal of this globe with the ring of Saturn, or the belts of Jupiter? Whence this affectation of ſimplifying the complicated order of nature? of mounting upwards, from theſe numberleſs individuals and ſpecimens of being, to the ideas of ſpecies, of genera, and claſſes under which they are formed by ſupreme intelligence, and which can intereſt only ſuch beings, as are diſtined to paſs through theſe to a near, and more near communication, with that power, by whom they are made? Why embarraſs the faculties with mathematical or metaphyſical abſtractions, while the animal is to be gratified only with the ſolid ſpecimen of bodies, not with ſuch ideal conceptions; whether of a point that has no parts, of a line that has no breadth, of a ſubſtance that has no qualities, of a quality apart from any ſubſtance; of a kind, conſidered apart from any ſpecies; or of a ſpecies conſidered apart from any individual? May not ſuch aberrations of thought appear as little fitted to this preſent ſtate of an animal, as the proviſion of teeth, of ſtomach and inteſtines, might have appeared to the fœtu; while, in the womb, he was nouriſhed

nouriſhed not with food, but with an immediate ſupply of blood by the umbilical cord. And may not appearances, myſterious in the preſent ſcene, be cleared up in a ſimilar way by apprehending a future ſtate of exiſtence; for which faculties though ſuperfluous in the life of an animal are yet wiſely provided, for the remaining courſe of a rational ſoul.

In this variety of being, we obſerve the gradation of excellence diſplayed on a ſcale of great extent. The parts riſe above one another by ſlow and almoſt inſenſible ſteps. That man is placed at the top of this viſible ſcale has never been queſtioned. In his alliance with the animal kingdom, he is enabled to perceive the material ſyſtem around him, to hold converſe with thoſe of his own ſpecies, and to obſerve, in the operations of nature, marks of intelligence which inexpreſſibly ſurpaſs the powers of man. In this, while he derives knowledge from the ſource of perceptions, in which he partakes with the animals, he aſpires to communication with an order of being greatly ſuperior to his own. In reſpect to the animal part of his nature, he is made to paſs through certain variations ſimilar to the changes which other animals undergo; and like them he is made to encounter, at different periods of his progreſs, an apparent termination of life: But, as he paſſes from the ſtate of an embryo or a fœtus to that of a breathing animal; as he paſſes from the ſtate of an infant, through that of youth and manhood, to old age; ſo may he paſs, at the diſſolution of his animal frame, to a new ſtate of intelligent being, furniſhed with other organs of perception and other means of communication with minds like his own; while the ſteps of their common parent and Maker become ſtill more and more obvious in that order of things, through which they are deſtined to paſs.

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Thus, it appears no violent ſtretch of imagination to conceive the human ſoul, in its preſent ſtate, as the embryo of a celeſtial ſpirit, not as a mere principle of animal life, to determine, or have its end, when that life ſhall come to a cloſe.

Man, as hath been obſerved in ſtating his place among the animals, partakes with them in the deſcription of an organized material frame; in certain animal powers and inſtincts, which are neceſſary or conducive to his preſervation or to his progreſs through the different ſtages of life. His inſtincts, mean while, direct him to the end, rather than the means he is to employ for the attainment of that end; theſe are left, in a great meaſure, to his own choice. Even the end he takes upon him in proceſs of time to ſelect; and, upon principles derived from the knowledge of himſelf and his ſituation, adopts a plan of life, different from that which would reſult from any particular appetite, paſſion, or diſpoſition of his nature; even of thoſe, he takes upon him to judge, from the higher principle of intelligence; and rejects or conforms himſelf to their dictates, according as he thinks it proper for himſelf, and for the order of nature in which he is involved.

The animals are qualified, by their organization and their inſtincts, for the particular element and the circumſtance in which they are placed, and they are not fit for any other: But man, by his intelligent powers, is qualified for any ſcene, of which the circumſtances may be obſerved, and in which the proprieties of conduct may be underſtood.

There are limits ſet to the progreſs of his animal frame. It is ſtationary; it declines; and is diſſolved: But to this progreſs of intelligence,

intelligence, in aſcending the ſcale of knowledge and of wiſdom, there are not any phyſical limits, ſhort of the univerſe itſelf, which the happy mind aſpires to know, and to the order of which he would conform his will.

While, in this mixed nature of man, the animal is doomed to periſh, the intellectual part may continue to live in immortal youth. Their connection, indeed, while it remains, implies a certain ſympathy of the one with what affects the other. The body ſuffers under dejection of mind; and the mind languiſhes under diſeaſe of the body. This ſympathy is obſervable in the decline of age, as well as in the occaſional checks which health may receive, during the vigour of life; but its effects are not univerſal, nor keep pace with the decline of the animal frame, or approach to its diſſolution. Many retain the faculties, at that period, ſuperior to any bodily infirmity; or rather, when the band that connects the ſoul with its animal frame is about to diſſolve, ſeem to anticipate that ſerenity to which they are deſtined, upon entire ſeparation from this maſs of the earth.

Examples of man's intellectual attainments, of which ſome have been mentioned in the preceding ſections, may ſerve to ſhew alſo how much farther he may advance, in continuing to extend the ranges of knowledge and of thought, and in gaining ſuch acceſſion of wiſdom and goodneſs, as may qualify him for higher ſcenes of exiſtence. The object aſſigned by Julian to Marcus Aurelius * was not any vulgar flight of ambition, like that of Alexander or Cæſar, to ſurpaſs or to command mankind, but imitation and reſemblance of the ſupreme God; and he attained to a

* Vide Cæſars of the emperor Julian.

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ſpecies of godlike eminence, which qualified him for a much higher ſcene of exiſtence, than that of the empire over which he preſided.

From ſuch examples we may preſume to hope, that the Almighty power which preſerves the animal, until the attainable ends of the animal life are obtained, will alſo preſerve this intelligent being to make thoſe attainments of which it is ſuſceptible, to which it aſpires, and in which it is actually far advanced.

This argument, however, may ſeem to halt with reſpect to thoſe who have made no ſuch uſe of their faculties; with reſpect to thoſe who are cut ſhort even in the progreſs of animal life; with reſpect to thoſe who periſh ſoon after their birth, or at an early period; or thoſe who live to employ their talents, as the inſtincts of a brute are employed, for mere animal purpoſes; and with reſpect to thoſe more eſpecially, who become more brutiſh and ſelfiſh as they advance in years. In reſpect to ſuch inſtances, we muſt confeſs, that there muſt be juſt apprehenſions of future puniſhment, not of reward, and doubts of their being deſtined to raiſe a ſuperſtructure, of which they have not laid a foundation: Theſe are not fitted to ſupply the ſtock of celeſtial ſpirits; nor is it contrary to the analogy of nature, in the courſe of things with which we are acquainted, to ſuppoſe that, while ſuch as become qualified for higher ſcenes of exiſtence are conducted thither, the unqualified will miſcarry; and ſuch as are debaſed, more eſpecially, may ſink in the ſcale of being, or actually periſh.

The maturity of its ſpecies is not gained by every plant that ſprings from its ſeed; nor is every ſeed deſtined to find a ſituation in which it may ſpring. The ſtock of every ſpecies, indeed, is kept up by nature, with a ſeemingly anxious care; but

but this end is ſecured, not by a penurious ſaving of the reſources provided, but by ſuch a profuſion of the ſupply, as admits of apparent waſte, without any danger of failure in the end propoſed. This apparent waſte may proceed from the colliſion of different natures, compriſed in the ſame ſyſtem, and from the ſubſerviency of one order of being to another, and of every order of being to the whole. Every plant hath its ſeed; and means are provided for its diſperſion, and the propagation of the ſpecies. In one inſtance, the ſeed, like that of the thiſtle, is fitted with a wing or a ſail; is wafted in the winds; and diſtributed far and near, on the ſurface of the land. In other inſtances, a grain or a fruit being deſtined to nouriſh the fowls of the air, or the beaſts of the field, quantities are removed by them from the parent ſtem; and the ſurplus of what they conſume is left to ſpring from the ſoil, and becomes a ſupply to the ſtock of the ſpecies: In other inſtances, the ſeed is ſhot from its place by the elaſtic ſpring of a pod, in which it was ripened: But notwithſtanding this ſeemingly anxious care in nature for the propagation of ſeeds, the earth is not every where prepared to receive them: Part falls on the waters, on the barren rock that is deſtitute of ſoil, or on the high ways, on which they are trod under foot.

It ſufficient for the purpoſe of nature, that the proviſion is fitted to accommodate the ſpecies, and to ſupply other wants that enter into the ſyſtem of her works. It may alſo be ſufficient for the purpoſe of nature, reſpecting the population of the intellectual worlds, that the ſupply is adequate, although many individuals, that ſeem to enter on the courſe which leads to higher ſcenes of being, have ſtopped ſhort, or periſhed on the way.

In the mean time, however we may ſport with ſuch viſionary conjectures

conjectures, there is reaſon to conclude that the future, for whomſoever it may be reſerved, will be fitted to moral agents; and, like the preſent, be a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Even the reward of immortality, conceived as a diſtinction in favour of thoſe who, by wiſdom and goodneſs, qualify themſelves for future and higher ſcenes of exiſtence, may be thought a worthy object of ambition, for the moſt elevated order of created being, who have conceived the uſe of their own faculties, their deſcent from almighty God, and their relation to the univerſe, of which he has made them a part.

Such hopes have ever accompanied or ſprung up in the human mind from the germ of religion. They are mentioned now as reſulting from the preſent appearance of things, and as conjectures founded on fact; and not as a neceſſary part in the preſent ſyſtem of moral government to influence the practice of virtuous men. Happineſs is to be valued more for the preſent, than for the future; and, to determine our choice of what is good, we need not be told of any effect it will have in any other period of time: For who would neglect his health for to-day, although he ſhould not look forward to its uſe for to-morrow.

The proſpect of a continued exiſtence for himſelf is not neceſſary to give to the ingenuous mind an intereſt in the continuance of this beautiful order of nature. Men are delighted in hearing of happy ſcenes that now paſs in diſtant parts of the world, in reading of ſcenes that paſſed many ages ago. To theſe they are not preſent any more than to the ſcenes which are to paſs hereafter and, if that to which they are not preſent; even that which paſt, while they had no exiſtence, can delight them; why not that alſo of which they have aſſurance in fu-

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ture periods of time. The ſame wiſdom and goodneſs, which now reign in the ſyſtem of nature will continue to reign. This ſun will riſe and run his courſe; theſe ſeaſons will ſucceed one another; the earth will be ſtocked with plants and animals; man will have ſcope for his intellectual and moral faculties; and, profiting by the experience of ages to come, may exhibit in ſome future time, a felicity of which theſe infant generations of men are not yet ſuſceptible.

The paſt, the preſent, and the future, are but as one object to the ſupreme intelligence of God, why not alſo to the created mind, ſo far as it is qualified to partake in this view of things, and can delight in contemplating the effects of eternal beneficence, whether paſt, preſent, or to come? In this contemplation, not the preſent point alone, but that eternity, in which wiſdom and goodneſs preſides, is embraced by the ingenuous mind; and the joy which he now feels upon this apprehenſion is as much his own, as the delight which he takes in recollecting the paſt, or in perceiving any preſent ſcene of felicity, to which he is a witneſs. If he ſhould himſelf be withdrawn from the ſcene, he rejoices to think that this beautiful order of nature will not change, nor be any way the worſe for his abſence.

On this ſubject, a gentleman being aſked his opinion, put, in return, the following queſtions; of which the diſcuſſion will be grateful to thoſe who delight in views of religion and its operation on minds of a generous and noble nature.

Queſt. I. "Is it not true, that the moſt part of men (perſuaded "even of the exiſtence of another world, where they ſhould live "eternally happy in the greateſt perfection of virtue, without any "weakneſs,) would be very glad after death, to forget their paſt "life

" life, rather than to retain the memory of ſo many follies, ſo ma-
" ny abſurdities, and ſo many bad proceedings, of which the re-
" membrance could not but affect them, or certainly not give
" them any contentment? I believe that then they would drink
" a draught of the water of the river Lethe, to forget the paſt.

II. " But if any one have not remembrance of the paſt, is it not,
" as if he were newly created, with reſpect to himſelf; and, rela-
" tive to his firſt ſtate, is it not the ſame thing as a perfect morta-
" lity or intire annihilation?

" If theſe two queſtions are to be anſwered in the affirmative,
" the immortality of the ſoul is not a thing deſirable for the moſt
" part of men; even on the ſuppoſition the moſt favourable for
" them; that is to ſay, that there were not any hell nor any pu-
" niſhment for their crimes.

" Farther, with reſpect to the proſpect of immortality let us
" conſider men, the moſt perfectly virtuous, having neither hopes
" nor fears; but living always with gratitude towards God, and
" ſubmitting always to his will, in thoſe things which do not
" depend on themſelves, and paſſing all their life in actions of
" goodneſs, and of well-wiſhing towards men, with a mind pure,
" ſatisfied, and benevolent.

" Marcus Aurelius the emperor, amongſt others, paſſed his
" life according to theſe principles, as much as human weakneſs
" could permit. A man like him could not have reaſon, after
" his death, to aſk to forget his paſt actions. But a man like
" him is incapable of having the leaſt uneaſineſs about the im-
" mortality of the ſoul. Let us ſee what he ſays of himſelf on
" this

" this ſubject:—" Whence is it, he ſuppoſes to be aſked, that the " gods who have adjuſted all things in ſuch beautiful order, and with " ſuch love to mankind, ſhould have neglected this one particular, " namely, that ſome of the beſt men, who have as it were car- " ried on a continual intercourſe, and, by many pious and reli- " gious offices, been admitted to a familiarity with the Divine " Being, ſhould yet, when they die, have no longer any exiſt- " ence, but be entirely annihilated and extinguiſhed.

" Now, if this be really the caſe, you may be aſſured that if " it ought to have been otherwiſe, the Gods would have made " it ſo. For, if it had been juſt, it would have been practi- " cable; and, had it been according to nature, nature would have " brought it to paſs. Now, that it is not ſo (if really it is not) you " may be aſſured of this, that it was not adviſeable that it ſhould " be ſo.

" You ſee that, in this diſquiſition, you are debating a matter of " juſtice with the gods; but we ſhould not dare to diſpute about " the goodneſs and juſtice of the gods, if we were not convinced " that they are poſſeſſed of thoſe perfections: And, if they are, " they undoubtedly would not be guilty of this neglect, nor admit " of any thing unjuſt or unreaſonable, in their adminiſtration of " the world *."

" In this paſſage, we ſee a divinity of character, how un- " like the other rabble of us, who are always thinking of futurity, " and of things which we do not poſſeſs; whilſt we ſhould only " be occupied in paſſing the actual moments, which God grants

* Vide Graves' Tranſlation of the Meditations of M. Antoninus, lib. 12. p. 5.

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" us, the moſt virtuouſly that is poſſible, which is the ſame thing " as the moſt happily.

" The more we examine the univerſe, the more we find every " thing to be governed by general laws, the moſt beneficial to the " whole, in millions of caſes, as far as we can comprehend. In " the caſe of man, and all the animals, the good of every indi- " vidual is not ſeparately conſulted, but the good of the ſpecies of " every kind is at the ſame time provided for; and if it were o- " therwiſe, there could be no general laws by which men or " beaſts could regulate the actions.

" Cold and heat muſt be felt by animals, that each may ſhun " his own deſtruction. Hunger and thirſt in the ſame manner. " The preſervation of every race being the moſt neceſſary point " in the creation of the world, pain is neceſſary, and a bleſſing to " the whole.

" As men and all animals, by their very nature muſt periſh, " the continuation of the ſeveral ſpecies is one of the moſt im- " portant laws in the creation; hence the great impulſe given to " males and females, with the ſtrongeſt attraction to continue " their ſpecies.

" From a full conſideration of the laws of God, phyſical and " moral, we ſee in innumerable caſes an unity of deſign, the moſt " marked; and, as far as we can comprehend we ſee the greateſt " power, joined with the greateſt goodneſs in the Creator. We " have no reaſon, therefore, to believe, that it was poſſible for God " to make the univerſe better than he has done; and when we " are not contented, we are little better than a hireling, who,

when

" when you give him more than is his due, will ſtill be diſſatis-
" fied, and aſk for more.

" It is ſingular, that men ſhould have leſs confidence in God,
" than they have in a common acquaintance. If a perſon ſhould
" be aſked to go to the country houſe of an acquaintance, in a ſmall
" iſland at ſome diſtance from the ſhore, where nothing could be
" had but in that houſe; could he, after paſſing one day, enter-
" tained agreeably in every reſpect, have the leaſt doubt of his
" being equally well treated the following days, or have the ſmall-
" eſt anxiety on the ſubject? How comes it to be poſſible that
" we ſhould have leſs confidence in God than in men? And that
" at death we ſhould have the leaſt fear of futurity, or the leaſt
" anxiety about what is to become of us?"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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